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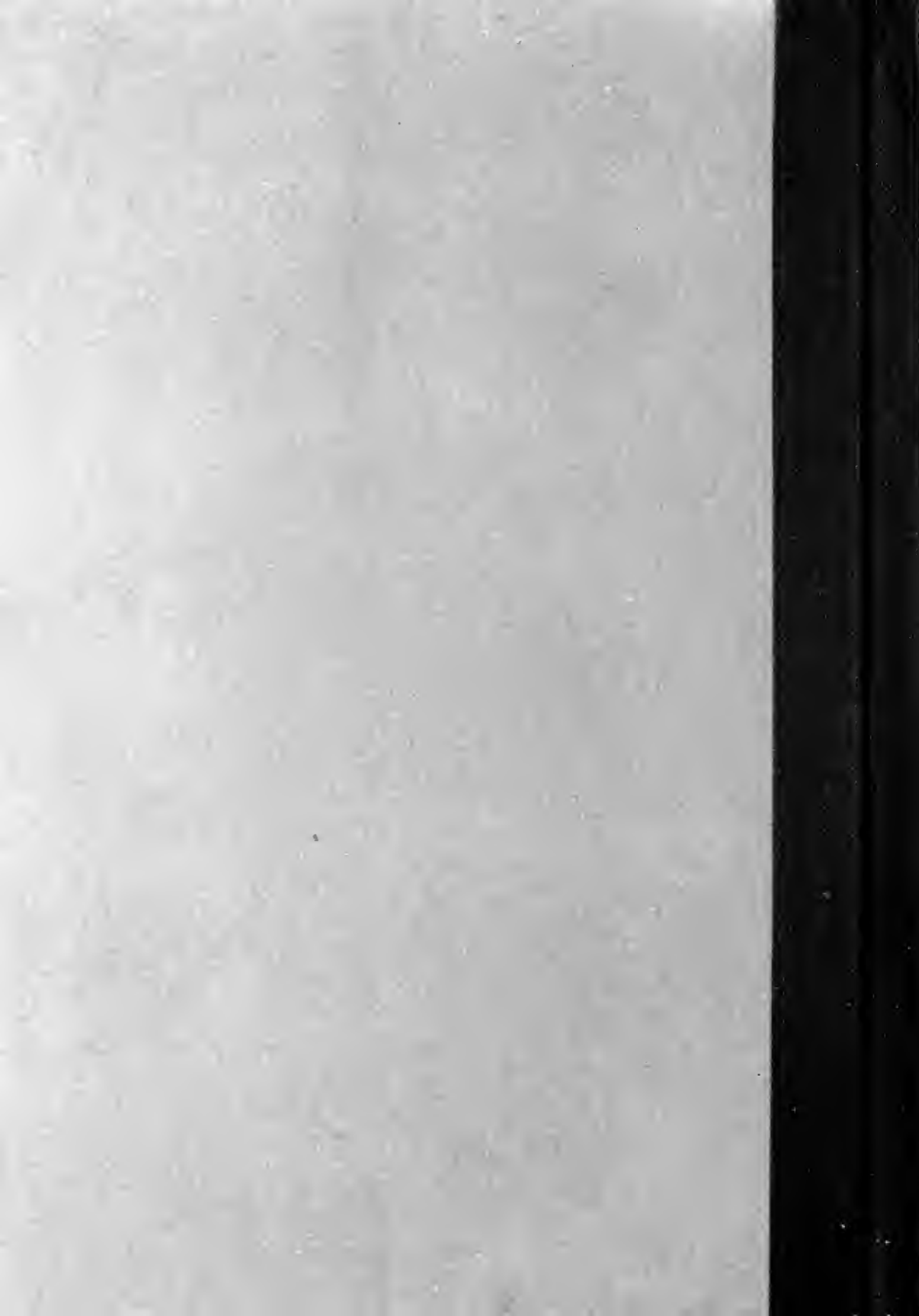
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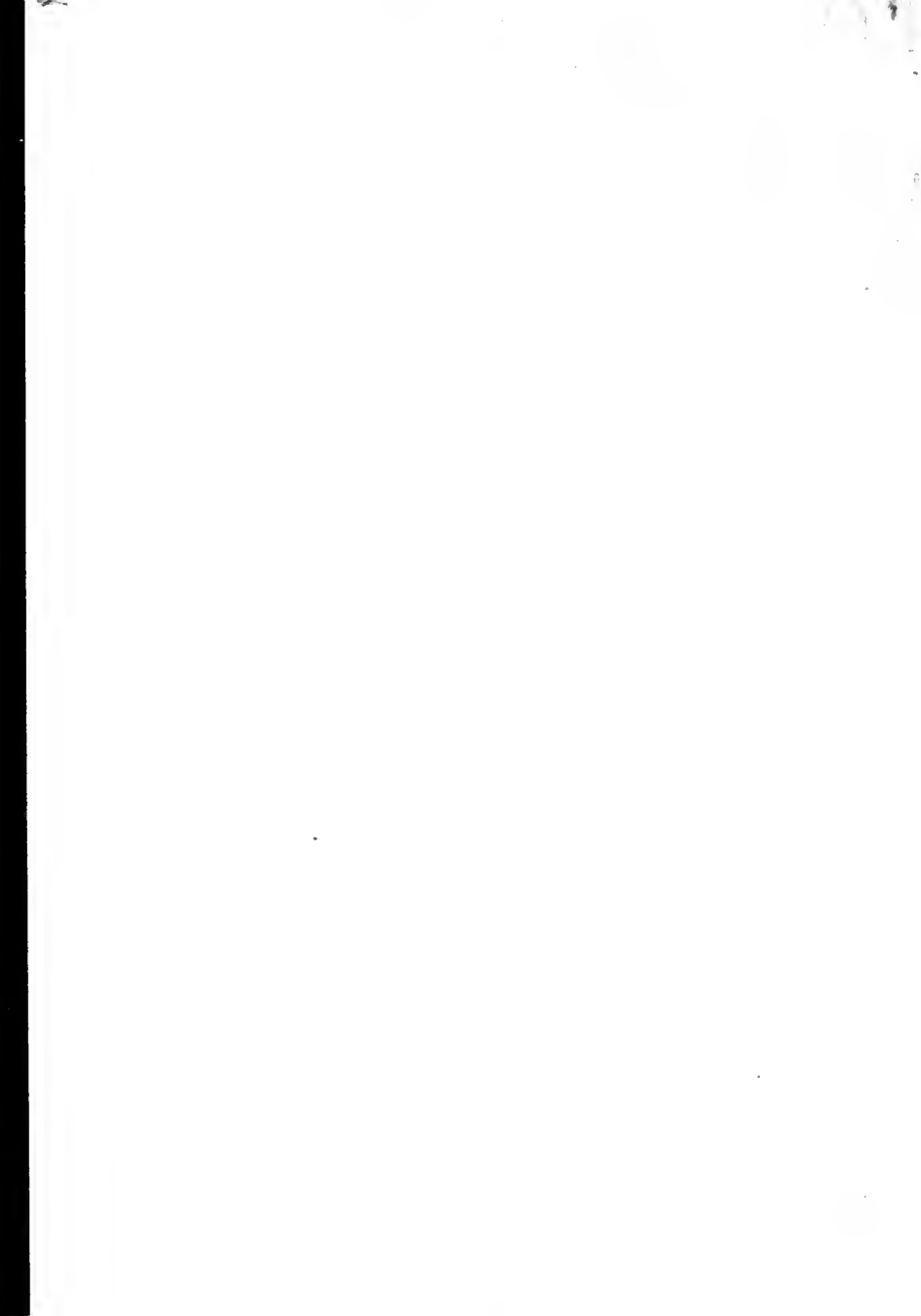
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DICKS' STANDARD PLAYS.

VIRGINIUS.

BY
JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.



"WELL, FATHER, WHAT'S YOUR WILL?"

NEW AND COMPLETE EDITION.—PRICE ONE PENNY.

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NOT. Colley Cibber
- 89.—**DESERTED DAUGHTER.** The
Holcroft

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NIGHT'S DREA

Nicholas Rowe

ROKE FOR A H

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VIRGINIUS.

TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY J. SHERIDAN KNOWLES.



Virginius.—"WHAT'S THIS?"—Act 1, scene 2.

Costumes and Cast of the Characters.

(As performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, May 17, 1820.)

APPIUS CLAUDIUS, Decemvir (*Mr. Abbott*).—Toga and purple stripe flesh legs, and red sandals.

SPURIUS OPIIUS, Decemvir (*Mr. White*).—General's armour, toga, stripe flesh legs, and sandals.

VIBULANUS, Decemvir (*Mr. Jeffries*).—General's armour, toga, and stripe flesh legs and sandals.

HONORIUS, Patrician (*Mr. Norris*).—Toga, with red band, and sandals.

VALERIUS, Patrician (*Mr. Vedy*).—Toga, with red band, and sandals.

CAIUS CLAUDIUS, Client to Appius (*Mr. Connor*).—Plain toga and sandals.

MARCUS, Client to Appius (*Mr. Claremont*).—Plain toga and sandals.

DENTATUS, a Veteran (*Mr. Terry*).—Plain toga, armour, and black sandals.

VIRGINIUS, a Centurion (*Mr. Macready*).—Plain toga, armour, and black sandals.

NUMITORIUS, his brother-in-law (*Mr. Egerton*).—Plain toga and mourning, and russet sandals.

ICILIUS, in love with Virginia (*Mr. Charles Kemble*).—Plain toga and mourning, and russet sandals.

LUCIUS, brother of Icilius (*Mr. Comer*).—Plain toga and mourning, and russet sandals.

PUBLIUS, DECIUS, SEXTUS, Soldiers (*Messrs. Mears, Truby, Crumpton*).—Lamberkeens, armour, and white kilt, flesh legs.

TITUS, SERVIUS, Citizens (*Messrs. Faucit and Atkins*).—Citizens, as in *Coriolanus*; brown stuff dresses, flesh legs, and russet sandals.

CNEIUS (*Mr. King*).—Plain toga.

VIRGINIA, daughter of *Virgilius* (*Miss Foote*).—Plain white; white robe, trimmed with white fringe, plain white ribbon tied round head, and hanging down behind.

SERVIA, her nurse (*Mrs. Faucit*).—White dress; red robe trimmed with yellow, plain white ribbon tied round head, and long ends hanging down behind.

FEMALE SLAVE (*Mrs. Cripp*).—Roman slave dress.

Citizens, Male and Female, Soldiers, Lictors, &c.

SCENE.—Chiefly in *Rome*.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A street in Rome.*

Enter SERVIUS and CNEIUS, and *Citizens, L.*—
Citizens stand on L.

Ser. Carbo denied a hearing!

Cne. (c.) Ay, and Marcellus cast into prison, because he sued a friend of one of the Decemvirs for a sum of money he had lent him.

Ser. (r. c.) And Appius resisted not? Appius! that in the first Decemvirate was a god to the people.

Cne. Resisted not! Nay, was most loud in favour of the decree; but hither comes Virgilius, who interested himself so much in Carbo's affair. He looks a little heated. Is not that Titus he is speaking to? Stand aside, master, and listen.

(Retire back on L.)

Enter VIRGINIUS and TITUS, R.

Vir. (c.) Why did you make him Decemvir, and first Decemvir too?

Tit. (R.) We had tried him, and found him honest.

Vir. (L. c.) And could you not have remained content? Why try him again, to find him dishonest? Knew ye not he was a Patrician, and of the Claudian family?

Tit. He laid down the Consulate—

Vir. Ha! ha! ha! to be elected into the Decemvirate, and he was so; and he laid down his office of Decemvir, to be re-elected into the Decemvirate, and he is so: Ay, by Jupiter! and to the exclusion of his late colleagues! Did not Titus Genutius lay down the Consulate?

Tit. He did.

Vir. (c.) Was he not next to Appius in the Decemvirate?

Tit. He was.

Vir. Did you not find him honest?

Tit. We did find him honest.

Vir. As honest as Appius Claudius?

Tit. Quite as honest.

Vir. Quite as honest! And why not re-elect him Decemvir? Most sapient people! You re-elect Appius into the Decemvirate for his honesty, and you thrust Titus out of the Decemvirate—I suppose for his honesty also? Why, Appius was sick of the Decemvirate! *(Goes, L.)*

Ser. (c.) I never heard him say so.

Vir. (L.) But he did say so—say so in my hear-

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R. RC. C. LC. L.

* * * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

ing; in presence of the senators, Valerius, and Caius Claudius, and I don't know how many others. 'Twas known to the whole body of the Senate—not that he was sick, but that he said so. Yes! yes! he and his colleagues, he said, had done the work of the Republic for a whole year, and it was now but just to grant them a little repose, and appoint others to succeed them.

Tit. Well, well, we can only say he changed his mind.

Vir. No, no, we needn't say that neither; as he had laboured in the Decemvirate, perhaps he thought he might as well repose in the Decemvirate.

Tit. I know not what he thought. He is Decemvir, and we made him so, and cannot help ourselves. Fare you well, Virgilius. Come, let's to the Forum.

[Exeunt Titus, Servius, and Cneius, R.]

Vir. (Still on L. looking after them and pointing.) You cannot help yourselves! Indeed you cannot; You help'd to put your masters on your backs. They like their seat, and make you show your paces;

They ride you—sweat you—curb you—lash you—and

You cannot throw them off with all your mettle! But here comes one, whose share in giving you To such unsparing riders, touches me More nearly, for that I've an interest In proving him a man of fair and most Erect integrity. (c.) Good day, Icilius.

Enter ICILIUS, R. S. E.

Icil. (R. c.) Worthy Virgilius! 'tis an evil day For Rome, that gives her more convincing proof, The thing she took for hope, is but a base And wretched counterfeit! Our new Decemvirs Are anything but friends to justice and Their country.

Vir. You, Icilius, had a hand In their election. You applied to me To aid you with my vote, in the Comitia; I told you then, and tell you now again, I am not pleas'd when a Patrician bends His head to a Plebeian's girdle! Mark me! I'd rather he should stand aloof, and wear His shoulder high—especially the nephew Of Caius Claudius.

Icil. I would have plodg'd my life—

Vir. 'Twas a high gage, and men have stak'd a higher

On grounds as poor as yours—their honour, boy!
Icilius, I have heard it all—your plans—
The understanding 'twixt the heads of the
people—

Of whom, Icilius, you are reckon'd one, and
Worthily—and Appius Claudius—all—
'Twas every jot disclos'd to me.

Icil. By whom?

Vir. Siccus Dentatus.

Icil. He disclosed it to you?

Siccus Dentatus is a crabbed man.

Vir. Siccus Dentatus is an honest man!

There's not a worthier in Rome! How now?

Has he deceiv'd me? Do you call him liar?

My friend! my comrade! honest Siccus,

That has fought in six score battles?

Icil. Good Virginius,

Siccus Dentatus is my friend—the friend

Of every honest man in Rome—a brave man—

A most brave man. Except yourself, Virginius,

I do not know a man I prize above

Siccus Dentatus—yet he's a crabbed man.

Vir. Yes, yes; he is a crabbed man.

Icil. A man

Who loves too much to wear a jealous eye.

Vir. No, not a whit!—where there is double
dealing,

You are the best judge of your own concerns;

Yet, if it please you to communicate

With me upon this subject, come and see me.

I told you, boy, I favour'd not this stealing

And winding into place. What he deserves,

An honest man dares challenge 'gainst the world—

But come and see me. (Going, R.) Appius
Claudius chosen

Decemvir, and his former colleagues, that

Were quite as honest as himself, not chosen—

No, not so much as nam'd by him—who nam'd

Himself, and his new associates! (R.) Well, 'tis
true

Dog fights with dog, but honesty is not

A cur doth bait his fellow—and e'en dogs,

By habit of companionship, abide

In terms of faith and cordiality—

But come and see me. (A shout, L.)

Icil. (C.) Appius comes!

The people still throng after him with shouts,

Unwilling to believe their Jupiter

Has mark'd them for his thunder. Will you
stay,

And see the homage that they render him?

Vir. Not I! Stay you; and, as you made him,
hail him;

And shout, and wave your hand, and cry, Long
live

Our first and last Decemvir, Appius Claudius!

For he is the first and last, and every one!

Rome owes you much, Icilius—Fare you well—

I shall be glad to see you at my house.

[Ereunt Virginius, R., Icilius, L.]

Enter APPIUS CLAUDIUS, CLAUDIUS, SIC-
CIUS DENTATUS, LUCIUS, TITUS, SER-
VIUS, MARCUS, and Citizens shouting, R. S. E.

Tit. Long live our first Decemvir!

Long live Appius Claudius!

Most noble Appius! Appius and the Decemvirate
for ever! (Citizens shout.)

App. (C.) My countrymen and fellow citizens,
We will deserve your favour,

Tst. (L.) You have deserv'd it,
And will deserve it.

App. For that end we nam'd
Ourselves Decemvir.

Tit. You could not have nam'd a better man.

Den. (R.) For his own purpose. (Aside.)

App. Be assur'd, we hold

Our power but for your good. Your gift it was;

And gifts make surest debtors. Fare you well—

And, for your salutations, pardon me

If I repay you only with an echo—

Long live the worthy citizens of Rome!

[Exit Appius, &c., the people shouting, L.]

Den. (Going, C.) That was a pretty echo!—a
most soft echo. I never thought your voices were
half so sweet! a most melodious echo! I'd have
you ever after make your music before the Patri-
cians' palaces; they give most exquisite re-
sponses!—especially that of Appius Claudius! a
most delicate echo!

Tit. What means Dentatus?

Ser. He's ever carping—nothing pleases him.

Den. (R.) Oh! yes—you please me—please me
mightily, I assure you.—You are noble legislators,
take most especial care of your own interest, be-
stow your votes most wisely too—on him who has
the wit to get you into the humour; and withal,
have most musical voices—most musical—if one
may judge by their echo.

Tit. (R.) Why, what quarrel have you with our
choice? Could we have chosen better?—I say,
there are ten honest Decemvirs we have chosen.

Den. I pray you, name them me.

Tit. There's Appius Claudius, first Decemvir.

Den. Ay, call him the head; you are right
Appius Claudius, the head. Go on!

Tit. And Quintus Fabius Vibulanus.

Den. The body, that eats and drinks while the
head thinks. Gall him Appius's stomach. Fill
him, and keep him from cold and indigestion, and
he'll never give Appius the head-ache! Well?—
There's excellent comfort in having a good
stomach!—Well?

Tit. There's Cornelius, Marcus Servilius, Minu-
cius, and Titus Antonius.

Den. (C.) Arms, legs, and thighs!

Tit. And Marcus Rabuleius.

Den. (R. C.) He'll do for a hand, and, as he's a
Senator, we'll call him the right-hand. We
couldn't do less, you know, for a Senator!—Well?

Luc. At least, you'll say we did well in electing
Quintus Petilius, Caius Duellius, and Spurius
Oppius, men of our order! sound men! "known
sticklers for the people"—at least you'll say we
did well in that!

Den. And who dares say otherwise? "Well?"
one might as well say "ill" as "well." Well is
the very skirt of commendation: next neighbour
to that mire and gutter, "ill." "Well," indeed!
you acted like yourselves! Nay, e'en yourselves
could not have acted better! Why, had you not
elected them, Appius would have gone without
his left hand, and each of his two feet.

Ser. (C.) Out! you are dishonest!

Den. Ha!

Ser. What would content you?

Den. A post in a hot battle! Out, you cur! Do
you talk to me?

Citizen. (From behind.) Down with him, he does
nothing but insult the people.

(The crowd approach Dentatus threateningly.)

Enter ICILIUS, suddenly, L. S. E.

Icil. Stand back! Who is't that says down with

Socius Dentatus? Down with him! 'Tis what the enemy could never do; and shall we do it for them? Who uttered that dishonest word? Who uttered it, I say? Let him answer a fitter, though less worthy, mate, Lucius Icilius!

Citizens. Stand back, and hear Icilius!

Icil. (c.) What! hav'n't I voted for the Decemvirs, and do I snarl at his jests? Has he not a right to jest? the good, honest Socius Dentatus, that, alone, at the head of the veterans, vanquished the Æqui for you? Has he not a right to jest? For shame! get to your houses! The worthy Dentatus! Cheer for him, if you are Romans! Cheer for him before you go! Cheer for him, I say!

[Exeunt Citizens shouting, R. S. E.]

Den. (c.) And now, what thanks do you expect from me, Icilius?

Icil. (R. c.) None.

Den. By Jupiter, young man, had you thus stepped before me in the heat of battle, I would have oloven you down—but I'm obliged to you, Icilius—and hark you! There's a piece of furniture in the house of a friend of mine, that's called Virginus, I think you've set your heart upon—dainty enough—yet not amiss for a young man to covet. Ne'er lose your hopes! He may be brought into the mind to part with it.—As to these curs, I question which I value more, their fawnings or their snarlings.—I thank you, boy! Do you walk this way?—I am glad of it! Come—'Tis a noble Decemvirate you have chosen for us! Come!

[Exeunt, R.]

SCENE II.—Virginus's House.

Enter VIRGINIUS and SERVIA, with some of Virginia's work in her hand.

Vir. (c.) And is this all you have observed? I think

There's nothing strange in that. An L and an I Twin'd with a V. Three very innocent letters To have bred such mischief in thy brain, good Servia!

Come, read this riddle to me,

Ser. (R. c.) You may laugh, Virginus, but I'll read the riddle right. The L doth stand for Lucius; and the I, Icilius; which, I take it, will compound Lucius Icilius.

Vir. So it will, good Servia.

Ser. Then, for the V; why, that is plain Virginia.

Vir. And now, what conjunction find you here?

Ser. What should I find, but love? The maid's in love.

And it is with Icilius. Look, the wreath Is made of roses, that entwines the letters.

Vir. And this is all?

Ser. And is it not enough?

You'll find this figuring where'er you look; There's not a piece of dainty work she does—Embroidery, or painting—not a task she finishes, but on the skirt, or border, In needle-work, or pencil, this, her secret, The silly wench betrays.

Vir. Go, send her to me—

Stay! Have you spoken to her of it?

Ser. (R.) I! Not I indeed; I left that task to you—

The' once I asked her what the letters meant.

She laugh'd, and drew a scratch across them; but

Had scarce done so, 'ere her fair visage fell, For grief that she had spoiled the cyphers—

“and
A sigh came out, and then almost a tear;
And she did look as piteous on the harm
That she had done, as she had done it to
A thing had sense to feel it.” Never after
She let me note her at her work again.
She had good reason!

Vir. (L.) Send her to me, Servia.

[Exit Servia, R.]

There's something here, that looks as it would bring me

Anticipation of my wish. I think
Icilius loves my daughter (c.)—nay, I know it;
And such a man I'd challenge for her husband;—
And only waited, till her forward spring
Put on, a little more, the genial likeness
Of colouring into summer, (R. c.) ere I sought
To nurse a flower, which, blossoming too early,
Too early often dies; “but if it springs
Spontaneous, and, unlooked for, woos our hand
To tend and cherish it, the growth is healthful;
And 'twere untimely, as unkind, to check it.”
I'll ascertain it shortly—soft, she comes. (Sits, c.)

Enter VIRGINIA, M. D.

Virginia. (Standing on his L.) Well, father, what's your will?

Vir. I wish'd to see you,

To ask you of your tasks—how they go on—
And what your masters say of you—what last
You did. I hope you never play
The truant?

Virginia. The truant! No, indeed, Virginus,

Vir. I am sure you do not—kiss me!

Virginia. O! my father,

I am so happy, when you're kind to me!

Vir. You're so happy when I'm kind to you!

Am I not always kind? I never spoke

An angry word to you in all my life,

Virginia! You are happy when I'm kind!

That's strange; and makes me think you have
some reason

To fear I may be otherwise than kind—
Is't so, my girl?

Virginia. Indeed, I did not know

What I was saying to you!

Vir. Why, that's worse

And worse! What! when you said your father's
kindness

Made you so happy, am I to believe

You were not thinking of him?

Virginia. I— (Greatly confused.)

Vir. Go, fetch me

The latest task you did.

[Exit Virginia, M. D.]

It is enough.

Her artless speech, like crystal, shows the thing
'Twould hide, but only covers. 'Tis enough!
She loves, and fears her father may condemn.

VIRGINIA, re-entering with a painting.

Here, sir.

Vir. What's this?

Virginia. 'Tis Homer's history

Of great Achilles parting from Briseis.

Vir. You have done it well. The colouring is
good,

The figures well design'd. 'Tis very well!—
Whose face is this you've given to Achilles?

Virginia. Whose face?

Vir. I've seen this face! Tut! tut! I know it
As well as I do my own, yet can't bethink me
Whose face it is!

Virginia. You mean Achilles' face?

Vir. Did I not say so? 'Tis the very face
Of—No! not of him. There's too much
youth

And comeliness; and too much fire, to suit
The face of Scævus Dentatus.

Virginia. O!

You surely never took it for his face!

Vir. Why, no; for now I look again, I'd swear
You lost the copy ere you drew the head,
And, to requite Achilles for the want
Of his own face, contriv'd to borrow one
From Lucius Icilius. My Dentatus,

Enter DENTATUS, L.

I am glad to see you! (*Rises. Virginia retires, R.*)

Den. (L.C.) 'Tis not for my news, then.

Vir. Your news! What news?

Den. More violence and wrong from these new
masters of ours, our noble Decemvirs—these
demi-gods of the good people of Rome! No man's
property is safe from them. Nay, it appears we
hold our wives and daughters but by the tenure of
their will. Their liking is the law. The Senators
themselves, scared at their audacious rule, with-
draw themselves to their villas and leave us to our
fate. There are rumours, also, of new incursions
by the Sabines.

Vir. Rome never saw such days.

Den. And she'll see worse, unless I fail in my
reasoning. Is that Virginia? (*Goes R. to her.*) I
saw her not before. How does the fair Virginia?
Why, she is quite a woman. I was just now
wishing for a daughter.

Vir. A plague, you mean.

Den. (R.) I am sure you should not say so.

Virginia. (R.) Indeed he should not; and he
does not say so,

Dentatus—not that I am not a plague,
But that he does not think me one, for all
I do to weary him. I am sure, Dentatus,
If to be thought to do well is to do well,
There's nothing I do ill: But it is far
From that! for few things do I as I ought—
Yet every thing is well done with my father,
Dentatus.

Vir. (*Goes to them.*) That's well done, is it not,
my friend? (*Aside.*) But if you had a daughter,
what would you do with her?

Den. I'd give her to Icilius. I should have been
just now torn to pieces, but for his good offices.
The gentle citizens, that are driven about by the
Decemvirs' lictors, like a herd of tame oxen, and,
with most beast-like docility, only low applauses
to them in return, would have done me the kind-
ness to knock my brains out; but the noble Icilius
bearded them singly, and railed them into temper.
Had I a daughter worthy of such a husband,
he should have such a wife, and a patrician's dower
along with her.

Vir. I wish to speak with you, Dentatus. (*They
retire to M.U.*) Icilius is a young man whom I
honour, but so far only as his conduct gives me
warrant. He has had, as thou knowest, a prin-
cipal hand in helping us to our Decemvirs. It may
be that he is what I would gladly think him: but

I must see him clearly, clearly, Dentatus. "If
he has acted with the remotest understanding,
touching the views of these new tyrants that we
are cursed withal, I disclaim him as my friend! I
cast him off for ever!"

[*Exeunt Virginius and Dentatus, M.D.*]

Virginia. (R.) How is it with my heart? I feel
as one

That has lost every thing, and just before
Had nothing left to wish for! He will cast
Icilius off!—I never told it yet;

But take of me, thou gentle air, the secret—
And ever after breathe more balmy sweet,

I love Icilius! "Yes, although to thee
I fear to tell it, that hast neither eye

To scan my looks, nor voice to echo me,
Nor e'en an o'er-apt ear to catch my words;

Yet, sweet invisible confidant, my secret
Once being thine—I tell thee, and I tell thee

Again—and yet again," I love Icilius!
He'll cast Icilius off!—not if Icilius

Approve his honour. That he'll ever do;
He speaks, and looks, and moves, a thing of

honour,

Or honour never yet spoke, look'd or mov'd,
Or was a thing of earth. (C) O, come Icilius;
Do but appear, and thou art vindicated.

Enter ICILIUS, L.

Virginia! sweet Virginia! sure I heard
My name pronounc'd. (*Both, C.*) Was it by thee,

Virginia?

Thou dost not answer? Then it was by thee—
O! would'st thou tell me why thou nam'd'st

Icilius!

Virginia. My father is incens'd with thee.

Dentatus

Has told him of the new Decemvirate,
How they abuse their office. You, he knows,
Have favoured their election, and he fears
May have some understanding of their plans.

Icilius. He wrongs me then!

Virginia. I thank the gods!

Icilius. For me,

Virginia? Do you thank the gods for me?
Your eye is moist—yet that may be for pity;
Your hand doth tremble—that may be for fear;
Your cheek is cover'd o'er with blushes! What,
O what can that be for?

Virginia. Icilius, leave me!

Icilius. Leave thee, Virginia? O! a word—a word
Trembles upon my tongue, which, if it match
The thought that moves thee now, and thou wilt
let me

Pronounce that word, to speak that thought for
thee,

I'll breathe—though I expire in the ecstasy
Of uttering it.

Virginia. Icilius, will you leave me?

Icilius. Love! Love! Virginia! Love! If I have,
spoke

Thy thought aright, ne'er be it said again,
The heart requires more service than the tongue
Can, at its best, perform. My tongue hath
serv'd

Two hearts—but, lest it should o'erboast itself,
Two hearts with but one thought. Virginia!

Virginia, speak—

(*Virginia covers her face with her
hand.*)

O, I have lov'd thee long;

So much the more ecstatic my delight.

To find thee mine at length.

Virginia. My secret's yours.

Keep it, and honour it, Icilius.

Enter VIRGINIUS and DENTATUS behind, M. D.

Vir. Icilius here!

Virginia. I ask thee now to leave me.

Icil. Leave thee! who leaves a treasure he has coveted

So long, and found so newly, ere he scans it Again, and o'er again; and asks and answers, Repeats and answers, answers and repeats, The half-mistrustful, half-assured question—And is it mine indeed?

Virginia. Indeed! indeed!

Now leave me.

Icil. I must see thy father first,

And lay my soul before him.

Virginia. Not to-night.

Icil. Now worse than ever, dear Virginia!

Can I endure his doubts; I'll lay my soul

Naked before him—win his friendship quite,

Or lose myself for ever!

(Going, is met by Virginus.)

Vir. (R. C.) Stop, Icilius!

Thou seest that hand? It is a Roman's, boy;

'Tis sworn to liberty—It is the friend

Of honour.—Dost thou think so?

Icil. (R. C.) Do I think

Virginus owns that hand?

Vir. (R.) Then you'll believe

It has an oath deadly to tyranny,

And is the foe of falsehood! By the gods,

Knew it the lurking place of treason, though

It were a brother's heart, 'twould drag the catiff

Forth. Darest thou take that hand?

Icil. I dare, Virginus.

Vir. Then take it! Is it weak in thy embrace?

Returns it not thy gripe? Thou wilt not hold

Faster by it, than it will hold by thee!

I overheard thee say, thou wast resolv'd

To win my friendship quite. Thou canst not win

What thou hast won already!—You will stay

And sup with us to-night?

Den. To be sure, he will!

Vir. And hark you, sir,

At your convenient time, appoint a day

Your friends and kinsmen may confer with me—

There is a bargain I would strike with you.

Come, to the supper-room. (Pausing, R.—Virginia

stands L., Icil. C.) Do you wait for me

To lead Virginia in, or will you do it?

(Icilius goes eagerly to Virginia, and

exits with her, R.)

Come on, I say; come on. Your hand, Dentatus.

[Exeunt, R.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter PUBLIUS, R., and SEXTUS, L.

Pub. This way! We muster at the Flaminian gate.

Sext. Shall we not wait for Decius?

Pub. No; were he ten times Decius. They'll have already begun their march. Come on.

Enter NUMITORIUS.

Num. Do you belong to the fourth legion?

Pub. We do.

Num. They are upon their march, then.

Pub. I told you so. Come on! come on!

[Exeunt Soldiers.]

Enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Numitorius, what soldiers were those that just now parted from you?

Num. Soldiers hastening to overtake the army, that's now upon its march.

Luc. 'Tis all confirmed then; the Sabines are in for us upon our borders.

Num. I pray you tell me something new! Know you not the Senate has met, and the Decemvirs have come off triumphant, in spite of all opposition?

Luc. Should they have been opposed in such a strait as this?

Num. Aye, should they. They dared not have armed a single citizen without the order of the Senate; which, had they obtained, the country would have been left naked to the foe, and then they had been forced to make room for more popular magistrates.

Luc. Why were they not opposed then?

Num. Did not I tell you they were opposed? Caius Claudius, Appius's own uncle, and Honorius, that noble senator, opposed them: and it was like to go against them, but for the brawling insolence of Spurius Oppus, and the effrontery of the head Decemvir, backed by the young Patricians.

Luc. So they are empowered to take up arms?

Num. To be sure they are; and they have done so.—One body has already marched, and by this time, no doubt, has come to blows with the enemy. The levy is still proceeding. All the Decemvirs, but Appius, take the field. He remains in Rome to keep good order—that is, the violator of all order. Why, where have you been, Lucius, to have felt no movement of so great and wide a stir? Your brother meets Virginus at his house to-day.—Come with me thither; for you, I know, are bid. Lucius, there's no huzzing for your Decemvirs now!—Come on, we have outstaid the hour. [Exeunt, L.]

SCENE II.—Virginus's House.

Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, NUMITORIUS, LUCIUS, and others, L.

Vir. (C.) Welcome, Icilius! Welcome, friends! Icilius,

I did design to speak with you of feasting And merriment, but war is now the word; One that unlovingly keeps time with mirth, Unless war's own—when'er the battle's won, And safe carousing comrades drink to victory!

Icil. Virginus! have you changed your mind?

Vir. My mind?

What mind? How now! Are you that boy, Icilius!

You set your heart so earnestly upon A dish of poor confections, that to balk you Makes you look blank! I did design to feast you Together with your friends—The times are changed—

The march, the tent, the fight becomes us now!

Icil. (I. C.) Virginus!

Vir. Well?

icil. How the boy
Reiterates my name.

icil. There's not a home
I have, but is the client of Virginus.

Vir. (c.) Well, well! I only meant to put it
off;

We'll have the revel yet! the board shall smoke!
The cup shall sparkle, and the jest shall soar
And mock us from the roof! Will that content
you?

Not till the war be done tho'—Yet, ere then,
Some tongue, that now needs only wag, to make
The table ring, may have a tale to tell
So petrifying, that it cannot utter it!

I'll make all sure, that you may be my guest
At any rate—altho' you should be forced
To play the host for me and feast yourself.
Look here. (*Shows a parchment to Icilius.*)

How think you? Will it meet the charge?
Will it not do? We want a witness, tho'!
I'll bring one; whom if you approve, I'll sign
The bond. I'll wait upon you instantly. (*Exit, k.*)

Luc. (L.) How feel you now, Icilius?

icil. (c.) Like a man
Whom the next moment makes, or quite un-
makes.

With the intensity of exquisite
Suspense, my breathing thickens, and my heart
Beats heavily, and with remittent throb,
As like to lose its action—See! my hope
Is bless'd! I live! I live! (*Stands, L.*)

Enter VIRGINIUS, R., conducting VIRGINIA,
with NUMITORIUS.

Vir. (L.) (*Holding his daughter's hand.*) You are
witnesses,

That this young creature I present to you,
I do pronounce my profitably cherish'd
And most deservedly beloved child;
My daughter, truly filial—both in word
And act—yet even more in act than word.
And—for the man who seeks to win her love—
A virgin, from whose lips a soul as pure
Exales, as e'er responded to the blessing
Breath'd in a parent's kiss. (*Kissing her*) Icilius!
(*Icilius rushes towards Virginus, and
kneels.*)

Since
You are upon your knees, young man, look up;
And lift your hands to heaven—You will be all
Her father has been—added unto all
A lover would be!

icil. All that man should be
To woman, I will be to her!

Vir. The oath
Is registered. (*Icilius rises.*) Did thou but know,
(*Takes a hand of each.*) young man,
How fondly I have watched her, since the day
Her mother died, and left me to a charge
Of double duty bound—how she hath been
My ponder'd thought by day, my dream by night,
My pray'r, my vow, "my offering, my praise,"
My sweet companion, pupil, tutor, child!—
Thou would'st not wonder that my drowning
eye,

And choking utterance, upbraid my tongue,
That tells thee, she is thine! (*Joins their hands.*)
Icilius,

I do betroth her to thee! let but the war
Be done—you shall espouse her. Friends, a
word!

[*Virginus and the rest exeunt, x. d.*]

icil. (c.) (*Holding her hand.*) Vir. Inia! my Vir-
ginia! I am all

Dissolv'd—o'erpower'd with the munificence
Of this auspicious hour—And thou, not mov'd—
Nor look'd at—nor speak'dst—to bless me with a
sigh

Of sweet according joy!—I love thee, but
To make thee happy! If to make thee so
Be bliss denied to me—lo, I release
The gifted hand—that I would faster hold,
Than wretches, bound for death, would cling to
life—

If thou would'st take it back—then take it back.

Virginia. I take it back—to give it thee again!

icil. O help me to a word will speak my bliss,
Or I am beggar'd—No! there is but one!
There cannot be; for never man had bliss
Like mine to name.

Virginia. "Thou dost but beggar me,
Icilius, when thou mak'st thyself a bankrupt;
Placing a value on me far above
My real little worth."—I'd help thee to
A hundred words; each one of which would far
O'er-rate thy gain, and yet no single one
Rate over high!

icil. Thou could'st not do it! No;
Thou could'st not do it! Every word of worth
Writ down and doubl'd, thou the whole summi'd
up,

Would leave with thee a rich remainder still!—
Pick from each rarer pattern of thy sex
Her rarest charm, till thou hast every charm
Of soul and body, that can blend in woman,
I would out-paragon the paragon
With thee!

Virginia. "And if thou would'st, I'd find thee,
for

Thy paragon, a mate—if that can be
A mate which doth transcend the thing 'tis
taken

To match—would make thy paragon look poor,
And I would call that so e'er matching mate
Icilius."

icil. No! I will not let thee win
On such a theme as this!

Virginia. Nor will I drop
The controversy, that the richer makes me
The more I lose.

icil. My sweet Virginia,
We do but lose and lose, and win and win;
"Playing for nothing but to lose and win;"
Then let us stop the game—and thus I stop it.
(*Kisses her.*)

Re-enter VIRGINIUS, and the others, x. d.

Vir. Witness, my friends, that seal! Observe,
it is

A living one! It is Icilius' seal;
And stamp'd upon as true and fair a bond—
Tho' it receive the impress blushing—
As ever signet kiss'd! Are all content?
Speak else! She is thy free affianc'd wife;
Thou art her free affianc'd husband! Come,
We have o'erdrawn our time—Farewell, Vir-
ginia!

Thy future husband for a time must be
Bellona's. To thy tasks again, my child;
Be thou the bride of study for a time.
Farewell!

Virginia. (R.) My father!
Vir. (R.) May the gods protect thee.

Virginia. My father!

Vir. Does the blood forsake thy cheek?
 Come to my arms once more! Remember, girl,
 The first and foremost debt a Roman owes,
 Is to his country; and it must be paid,
 If need be, with his life. Why, how you hold
 me!
 Icilius, take her from me! (Icilius goes to her.)
 Ho! Within!
 Within there! Servia!

Enter SERVIA.

Look to your child!

Come, boy.

Icil. (R.) Farewell, Virginia.

Vir. Take her in!

Virginia. The gods be with thee, my Icilius—
 Father,

The gods be with thee—and Icilius.

Vir. I swear, a battle might be fought and won
 In half the time! Now, once for all, farewell;
 Your sword and buckler, boy! The foe! the foe!
 Does he not tread on Roman ground? Come on!
 Come on! charge on him! drive him back! or
 die!

[*Exeunt Virginia and Servia, R.—the rest, L.*]

SCENE III.—*Appius's House.*

Enter APPIUS, L.

App. It was a triumph, the achieving which
 O'erpaid the risk was run—and that was great.
 They have made trial of their strength, and
 learn'd

Its value from defeat. (c.) The Senate knows
 Its masters now: and the Decemvirate,
 To make its reign eternal, only wants
 Its own decree, which little pains will win.
 Ere this, the foe has, for his mal' invasion,
 Been paid with chastisement. "Retir'd within
 His proper limits, leisure waits upon us
 To help us to the recompense, decreed
 To our noble daring, who have set ourselves
 In such high seats, as at our feet array
 The wealth, and power, and dignity of Rome
 In absolute subjection! Tyranny!
 How glad 'ke is thy port! Thou giv'st, and tak'st,
 And ask'st no other leave, than what thy own
 Imperial will accords. Jove does no more!"
 Now, Claudius—

Enter CLAUDIUS, R.

Claud. We have suffer'd a defeat!

App. What! The Decemvirs fly!

Claud. The soldiers fight

With only half a heart. "The other half
 Looks on, and cares not which side proves the
 winner."

App. (c.) Then decimate them. Traitors!
 Recruits!

Why, we shall have them at our doors!

Have we lost ground, my Claudius?

Claud. (R. C.) None, except

What we've retrac'd in fame. We strove to
 teach

The enemy their road lay backwards, but
 They would not turn their faces for us. Each
 Retains his former line.

Enter MARCUS, R.

App. What news?

Marc. (R.) The Ceuqi

Still press upon us. Rumours are afloat
 Of new disasters, which the common cry
 Be sure still multiplies and swells. Dentatus,
 That over-busy crabbed veteran,
 Walks up and down among the people, making
 Your plans his theme of laughter. Nought he
 stints

That may reflect you in an odious light,
 And lower the Decemvirate.

App. A dungeon

Would do good service to him! Once within,
 Strangling were easy! We must stop his mouth—
 "Unwholesome food—or liquor"—Where was
 he

When last you saw him?

Marc. In the Forum.

App. So!

He is past service, is he not? Some way
 To clear the city of him. Come, we'll hear him,
 And answer him, and silence him! 'Tis well
 The dog barks forth his spleen; it puts us on
 Our guard against his bite. Come, to the Forum.
 [*Exeunt, R.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Forum.*

*Enter DENTATUS, TITUS, SERVIUS, and
 Citizens, R.*

Tit. (c.) What's to be done?

Ven. (c.) We'll be undone—that's to be done.

Ser. We'll do away with the Decemvirate.

Den. You'll do away with the Decemvirate?—
 The Decemvirate will do away with you! You'll
 do away with yourselves. Do nothing—the enemy
 will do away with both of you. In another month,
 a Roman will be a stranger in Rome. A fine pass
 we are come to, masters!

Tit. (R.) But something must be done.

Den. Why, what would you have? You shout
 and clap your hands, as if it were a victory you
 heard of; and yet you cry—Something must be
 done! Truly I know not what that something is,
 unless it be to make you General. How say you,
 masters?

Ser. We'd follow any man that knew how to lead
 us, and would rid us of our foes, and the Decem-
 virate together.

Den. You made these Decemvirs! You are
 strangely discontented with your own work! And
 you are over-cunning workmen too. You put
 your materials so firmly together, there's no such
 thing as taking them asunder! What you build,
 you build—except it be for your own good.—There
 you are bunglers at your craft. Ha! ha! ha! I can-
 not but laugh to think how you toiled, and strained,
 and sweated, to rear the stones of the building
 one above another, when I see the sorry faces
 you make at it.

Tit. But tell us the news again.

Den. Is it so good? Does it so please you?
 Then prick your ears again, and listen. We have
 been beaten again—beaten back on our own soil.
 Rome has seen its haughty masters fly before the
 chastisement, like slaves.—returning cries for blows
 —and all this of your Decemvirs, gentlemen.

1st Dit. (R.) Huzza for it again!

(*The people shout.*)

2nd Dit. (R.) Hush! Appius comes.

Den. (R.) And do you care for that? You that
 were, just now, within a stride of taking him and
 his colleagues by the throat? You'll do away with
 the Decemvirs, will you! And let but one of them

appear, you dare not, for your life, but keep your spleen within your teeth! Listen to me, now! I'll speak the more for Appius—

Enter APPIUS, CLAUDIUS, and MARCUS,
preceded by victors, E. U. E.

I say, to the eternal infamy of Rome, the foe has chased her sons, like hares, on their own soil, where they should prey like lions—and so they would, had they not keepers to tame them.

App. (c.) What's that you are saying to the people, Siccus Dentatus?

Den. I am regaling them with the news.

App. The news?

Den. (E. c.) Ay, the news—the newest that can be had; and the more novel, because unlooked for. Who ever thought to see the eagle in the talons of the kite?

App. It is not well done in you, Dentatus, to chafe a sore. It makes it rankle. If your surgery has learned no better, it should keep its hands to itself! You have very little to do, to busy yourself after this fashion.

Den. I busy myself as I like, Appius Claudius.

App. I know you do, when you labour to spread disaffection among the people, and bring the Decemvirs into contempt.

Den. The Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. Ha! dare you say so?

Den. (Closer to him.) Dare! I have dared cry "Come on!" to a cohort of bearded warriors—is it thy smooth face should appal me? Dare! it never yet flurried me to use my arm—Shall I not, think you, be at my ease, when I but wag my tongue? Dare, indeed!

(Laughing contemptuously.)

App. Your gray hairs should keep company with honest speech!

Den. Shall I show you, Appius, the company they are wont to keep? Look here! and here! (Uncovering his forehead and shewing scars.) These are the vouchers of honest deeds—such is the speech with which my gray hairs keep company. I tell you, to your teeth, the Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. What, are they not serving their country at the head of her armics?

Den. They'd serve her better in the body of her armics! I'd name for thee a hundred Centurions would make better generals. A common soldier, of a year's active service, would take his measures better. Generals! Our generals were wont to teach us how to win battles.—Tactics are changed—Your generals instruct us how to lose them.

App. Do you see my victors?

Den. There are twelve of them.

App. What, if I bid them seize thee?

Den. They'd blush to do it.

App. Why now, Dentatus, I begin to know you;

I fancied you a man that lov'd to vent His causeless anger in an under breath, And speak it in the ear—and only then When there was safety! Such a one, you'll own, Is dangerous; and, to be trusted as A friend or foe, unworthy. But I see You rail to faces—Have you not so much Respect for Appius as to take him by

The hand—when he confesses you have some Pretence to quarrel with his colleagues' plans, And find fault with himself? Which, yet you'll own,

May quite as well be kindly done, Dentatus, As harshly—Had you only to myself Declard'd your discontents, the more you had rail'd,

The more I should have thank'd you.

Den. Had I thought—

App. And have you been campaigning then so long,

And prosperously? and mistrust you, Siccus, That a young scarless soldier, like myself, Would listen to your tutoring? See, now, How much you have mistaken me! Dentatus, In a word—Can you assist the generals? And will you?

Den. I have all the will—but as For the ability—

App. Tut! tut! Dentatus, You vex me now! This coyness sits not well on you.

You know, as well as I, you have as much Ability as will. I would not think you A man that loved to find fault, but to find fault. Surely the evil you complain of, you Would lend a hand to remedy! See, now, 'Tis fairly put to you—what say you?

Den. Appius!

You may use me as you please.

App. And that will be, As you deserve! I'll send you as my Legate, To the army! (Shout from the people.) Do you hear your friends, Dentatus?

A lucky omen that! Away! away! Apprise your house—prepare for setting out. I'll hurry your credentials—Minutes now Rate high as hours! Assist my colleagues with Your counsel—if their plans displease you, why Correct them—change them—utterly reject them; And if you meet obstruction—notice me, And I will push it by—There now! Your hand!—Again! Away! All the success attend you, That Appius wishes you!

Den. Success is from The gods; whose hand soe'er it pleases them To send it by—I know not what success 'Tis Appius' wish they send;—but th's I know—I am a soldier; and, as a soldier, I Am bound to serve. All the success I ask, Is that which benefits my country, Appius.

[Exit Den., L.]

App. (c.) You have serv'd her over-long! (Aside.) Now for our causes.

(Appius ascends the tribunal near E. S. E.)

Claud. (L. c.) (To Marcus.) Do you see the drift of this?

Marc. (L. c.) I cannot guess it.

Claud. Nor I.

App. (To a Plebeian, c.) Are you the suitor in this cause?

Speak!

Plebeian. Noble Appius, if there's law in Rome To right a man most injur'd, to that law Against you prond Patrician I appeal.

App. No more of that, I say! Because he's rich And great, you call him proud! 'Tis not unlike, Because you're poor and mean, you call yourself Injur'd.—Relate your story; and, so please you, Spare epithets!

Plebeian. Grant me a minute's pause,
I shall begin.

(Virginia at this moment crosses the stage with her nurse, and is met by Numitorius, who holds her in conversation; Appius rivets his eyes upon her.)

Num. (c.) You have heard the news?
Virginia. (c.) What news, dear uncle?

Num. Step

Aside with me, I'll tell you.

(Takes her a little farther from the Tribunal.)

App. Can it be

A mortal that I look upon?

Virginia. They are safe!

I thank the gods!

App. Her eyes look up to heaven,
Like something kindred to it—rather made
To send their glances down, and fill the earth
With worship and with gratulation—What
A thrill runs up and down my veins; and all
throughout me!

Plebeian. Now, most noble Appius—

App. Stop!

Put off the cause, I cannot hear it now!

Attend to-morrow! An oppressive closeness
Allows me not to breathe—Lictors! make clear
The ground about the Rostrum!

(Descends and approaches Claudius with precipitation.)

Claudius! Claudius!—

Marcus, go you and summon my physician

To be at home before me. *(Exit Marcus.)*

Claudius!

Claudius! there! there!

Virginia. (L.) You send a messenger to-night?

App. (R.C.) Paint me that smile! I never saw a
smile

Till now. My Claudius, is she not a wonder?
I know not whether in the state of girlhood
Or womanhood to call her.—'Twixt the two
She stands, as that were loth to lose her, this
To win her most impatient. The young year,
Trembling and blushing 'twixt the striving kisses
Of parting spring and meeting summer, seems
Her only parallel!

Num. 'Tis well! I'll send
Your father word of this. But have you not
A message to Icilius?

App. Mark you, Claudius?

There is a blush!—I must possess her.

Virginia. Tell him,

I think upon him—Farewell, Numitorius!

[Exit with Servia, R.]

Num. (R.) Farewell, Virginia.

Claud. (R. c.) Master, will you tell me
The name of that young maiden?

Num. She is called

Virginia, daughter of Virginius;
A Roman citizen, and a centurion.
In the army.

Claud. Thank you; she is very like

The daughter of a friend of mine. Farewell.

Num. Farewell! *[Exit, R.]*

App. (L. c.) I burn, my Claudius! brain and
heart. There's not
A fibre in my body but's on fire!

With what a gait she moves! Such was not Hebe,
Or Jupiter had sooner lost his heaven,
Than changed his cup-bearer—a step like that
The rapture-glowing clouds might well bear up,

And never take for human! Find me, Claudius,
Some way to compass the possession of her.

Claud. 'Tis difficult—Her father's of repute;
The highest of his class.

App. I guessed it! *(R. c.)* Friends
Are ever friends, except when friends are needed.

Claud. Nay, Appius!—

App. (R.) If thou canst not give me hope,
Be dumb!

Claud. A female agent may be used
With some success.

App. How? How?

Claud. To tamper with

That woman that attends her.

App. Set about it.

Claud. Could she but be induced to help you to
A single meeting with her.

App. Claudius! Claudius!

Effect but that.

Claud. I'll instantly about it.

App. (c.) Spare not my gold—nor stop at
promises.

I will fulfil them fast as thou can'st make them.

To purchase such a draught of ecstasy

I'd drain a kingdom—Set about it, Claudius!

Away! I will not eat, nor drink, nor sleep.

Until I hear from thee!

Claud. (L. c.) Depend upon me!

App. I do, my Claudius! for my life—my life!

[Exeunt Appius, M. N., Claudius, L.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Appius's House.

Enter APPIUS, L.

It is not love, *(c.)* if what I've felt before
And call'd by such a name, be love—a thing
That took its turn—that I could entertain,
Put off, or humour—'tis some other thing;
Or if the same, why in some other state—
Or I am not the same—or it hath found
Some other part of sensibility

More quick, whereon to try its power, and there
Expend it all! Now, Claudius, your success?

Enter CLAUDIUS,

Claud. (R.) Nothing would do, yet nothing left
undone!

She was not to be purchas'd

App. (R. c.) Did she guess—

Claud. She could not,

So guarded was my agent; who described you

A man of power, of noble family,

And regal fortune—one that ask'd not what

His pleasures cost—no further made disclosure.

App. (c.) And did it nothing move her,
Claudius?

Claud. (R. c.) Nothing.

The more my agent urg'd, the more the shrunk
And wither'd hag grew callous; further press'd,
And with more urging importuning, ire
And scorn, imprecations and invectives
Ventured upon the monster *(as she call'd him)*
That would pollute her child, compell'd my
advocate

To drop the suit she saw was hopeless.

App. Now

Had I a friend indeed!

Claud. Has Appius need

To search for such a friend, and Claudius by him?

App. Friends ever are provisionally friends—
Friends for so far—friends just to such a point
And then “farewell!” friends with an under-
standing—

As “should the road be pretty safe”—“the sea
Not over-rough,” and so on—friends of *ifs*
And *buts*—no friends!—O, could I find the man
Would be a simple thorough-going friend!

Claud. I thought you had one, Appius,

App. (L. c.) So thought Appius.

Till Appius thought upon a test of friendship,
He fears he would not give unto himself,
Could he be Appius' friend.

Claud. Then Appius has

A truer friend than Appius is to Appius.
I'll give that test! (Meet at c., and join hands.)

App. What! you'd remove her father
And that Icilius whom you told me of?

Claud. Count it as done.

App. My Claudius, is it true?

Can I believe it? art thou such a friend,
That, when I look'd for thee to stop and leave
me,

I find thee keeping with me, step by step;
And even in thy loving eagerness
Outstriding me? I do not want thee, Claudius,
To soil thy hand with their plebeian blood.

Claud. What would'st thou, then?

App. I was left guardian to thee—

Claud. Thou wast.

App. Amongst the various property
Thy father left, were many female slaves.

Claud. Well?

App. It were easy for thee (were it not?)
To invent a tale, that one of them confess'd
She had sold a female infant (and of course
Thy slave) unto Virginus' wife, who pass'd it
Upon Virginus as his daughter, which
Supposititious offspring is this same
Virginia?

Claud. I conceive you.

App. To induce

The woman to confirm your tale, would ask
But small persuasion. Is it done?

Claud. This hour.

I know the school, my Appius, where Virginia
Pursues her studies; thither I'll repair,
And seize her as my slave at once. Do thou
Repair to thy tribunal, whither, should
Her friends molest me in the attempt, I'll bring
her,

And plead my cause before thee.

App. (L.) Claudius! Claudius!

How shall I pay thee? O, thou noble friend!
Power, fortune, life, what'er belongs to Appius,
Reckon is thine! Away, away, my Claudius!

[Exit Appius, L., Claudius, R.]

SCENE II.—A street in Rome.

Enter LUCIUS, L. meeting TITUS, SERVIUS, and
CNEIUS.

Luc. Well, masters, any news of Siccus Den-
tatus from the camp? How was he received by
the Decemvirs?

Tit. He was received well by the Decemvirs.

Cne. It wasn't then for the love they bare him.

Tit. But they expect he'll help them to return
the cuffs they have gotten from the enemy.

Servius. Do you wish for a victory?

Luc. Yes, if Dentatus wins it. 'Tis to our
credit, masters—He's one of us.

Ser. And is not Spurius Oppius one of us?

Luc. He is; but he is in league with the patri-
cians—“that is, the patrician Decemvirs.” He is
but half a plebeian, and that is the worse half.—
“The better half he threw away when he became
half a patrician.” I never liked your half-and-half
gentry; they generally combine the bad of both
kinds, without the good of either.

Ser. Well, we shall have news presently. Your
brother, Icilius, has just arrived with despatches
from the camp. I met him passing through the
Forum, and asked him what news he brought? He
answered, none; but added, we might look for
news of another kind than what we had been
lately accustomed to hear. (A shriek without.)

Cne. What's that?

Tit. Look, yonder, masters! See!

Ser. 'Tis Appius' client dragging a young
woman along with him.

Tit. Let us stand by each other, masters, and
prevent him.

Enter CLAUDIUS, L., dragging along VIRGINIA,
followed by SERVIA, and others.

Servia. (L. c.) Help! help! help!

Luc. (c.) Let go your hold!

Claud. (c.) Stand by!

She is my slave!

Servia. His slave? Help! help! His slave?

He looks more like a slave than she! Good
masters!

Protect the daughter of Virginus,

Luc. Release the maid.

Tit. Forbear this violence.

Claud. I call for the assistance of the laws;

She is my slave.

Servia. She is my daughter, masters,

My foster-daughter; and her mother was

A free-born woman—and her father is

A citizen, a Roman—good Virginus,

As I said before—Virginus, the Centurion,
Whom all of you must know.—Help! help! I
say,

You see she cannot speak to help herself;

Speak for her, masters—help her, if you're men!

Tit. Let go your hold.

Claud. Obstruct me at your peril.

Luc. We'll make you, if you will not.

Claud. Let me pass.

Ser. Let go your hold, once more.

Claud. Good masters! patience—

Hear me, I say—She is my slave—I wish not

To use this violence, my friends; but my not

A master seize upon his slave?—Make way,

Or such of you as are dissatisfied

Repair with me to the Decemvir.—Come,

I only want my right!

Tit. Come on then!

Ser. Ay,

To the Decemvir!

Servia. Run, run for Numitorius!—Alarm our
neighbours!—Call out Icilius' friends!—I shall
go mad! Help! help! help!

SCENE III.—The Forum.

Enter APPIUS, R. U. E., preceded by lictors.

App. (c.) Will he succeed?—Will he attempt
it?—Will he

Go through with it?—(Looking out, L.)—No sign
—I almost wish

He had not undertaken it; yet wish,
More than I wish for life, he may accomplish
What he has undertaken. Oh! the pause
That precedes action! It is vacancy
That o'erweighs action's substance. What I fear
Is, that his courage can't withstand her tears,
That will besure to try and succour her;
Pointing, as 'twere, to every charm, and pleading
With melting eloquence. I hear a sound
As of approaching clamour—and the rush
Of distant feet—He comes! I must prepare
For his reception.

(Appius ascends the Tribunal—Claudius enters, still holding Virginia, followed by Servia—Women and Citizens, crying "Shame!")

Claud. Do not press upon me;
Here's the Decemvir—he will satisfy you,
Whether a master has a right or not
To seize his slave when he finds her.

Servia. She is no slave
Of thine! She never was a slave! Thou slave!
To call her by that name—Ay! threaten me!
She is a free-born maid, and not a slave,
Or never was a free-born maid in Rome!
Oh! you shall dearly answer for it!

App. Peace!
What quarrel's this? Speak, those who are
aggrieved

Enter NUMITORIUS, L.

Num. (L.) Where is Virginia? Wherefore do
you hold that maiden's hand?

Claud. Who asks the question?

Num. I! Her uncle, Numitorius.

Claud. Numitorius, you think yourself her
uncle—Numitorius,

No blood of yours flows in her veins, to give you
The title you would claim. Most noble Appius!
If you sit here for justice, as I think
You do, attend not to the clamour of
This man, who calls himself this damsel's uncle.
She is my property—was born beneath
My father's roof, whose slave her mother was,
Who (as I can establish past dispute)
Sold her an infant to Virginius' wife,
Who never had a child, and heavily
Revolv'd her a wrenness. My slave I have found
And seiz'd—as who that finds his own (no matter
How long soever miss'd; should fear to take it?
If they oppose my claim, they may produce
Their counter-proofs and bring the cause to
trial!

But till they prove mine own is not mine own—
(An undertaking somewhat perilous)
Mine own I shall retain—yet giving them,
Should they demand it, what security
They please, for reproducing her.

App. Why that
Would be but reasonable.

Num. Reasonable?

Claudius!—(With much vehemence—recollects himself.)

He's but a mask upon the face
Of some more powerful contriver.—(Aside.)—
Appius!

My niece's father is from Rome, thou know'st,
Serving his country. Is it not unjust,
In the absence of a citizen, to suffer
His right to his own child to be disputed?

Grant us a day to fetch Virginius,
That he himself may answer this most foul
And novel suit—Meanwhile to me belongs
The custody of the maid—her uncle's house
Can better answer for her honour than
The house of Claudius. 'Tis the law of Rome
Before a final sentence, the defendant
In his possession is not to sustain
Disturbance from the plaintiff,

Tit. A just law.

Ser. And a most reasonable demand.

All the Cits. (L.) "Ay! Ay! Ay!"

App. Silence, you citizens! will you restrain
Your tongues, and give your magistrate permis-
sion

To speak? The law is just—most reasonable—
I fram'd that law myself—I will protect
That law!

Tit. "Most noble Appius!"

Ser. "A most just decree!"

All the Cits. "Ay! Ay!"

App. "Will you be silent? Will you please to
wait

For my decree, you most untractable
And boisterous citizens! I do repeat it,"
I fram'd that law myself, and will protect it,
But are you, Numitorius, here defendant?
That title, none but the reputed father
Of the young woman has a right to—How
Can I commit to thee what may appear
The plaintiff's property; and if not his,
Still is not mine? I'll give thee till to-morrow
Ere I pass a final judgment.—But the girl
Remains with Claudius, who shall bind himself
In such security as you require,
To reproduce her at the claim of him
Who calls her daughter. This is my decree.

Num. A foul decree. Shame! shame!

Ser. Aye, a most foul decree.

Cne. A villainous decree.

Ser. Most villainous!

Servia. (c.) Good citizens, what do you with our
weapons,
When you should use your own? Your hands!—
your hands!

He shall not take her from us.
Gather round her,
And if he touch her, be it to his cost;
And if ye see him touch her, never more
Expect from us your titles—never more
Be husbands, brothers, lovers, at our mouths,
Or anything that doth imply the name
Of men—except such men as men should blush
for.

App. Command your wives and daughters,
citizens,
They quit the Forum.

Servia. They shall not command us,
That care not to protect us.

App. Take the girl,
If she is yours.

Claud. Stand by.

Virginia. O, help me! help me!

Enter ICILIUS, L.

ICil. Virginia's voice. Virginia!

(Rushes to her.)

Virginia. O, Icilius!

(Falls fainting in his arms.)

ICil. Take her, good Numitorius.

App. You had better

Withdraw, Icilius; the affair is judged.

Claud. (L. c.) I claim my slave.

ICIL. (c.) Stand back, thou double slave!
Touch her, and I will tear thee, limb from limb,
Before thy master's face.—She is my wife,
My life, my heart, my heart's blood.—Touch
her

With but a look—

APP. My lictors, there, advance!
See that Icilius quits the Forum.—*CLAUDIUS*,
Secure your slave.

ICIL. Lictors, a moment please
For your own sakes. Do not mistake these
arms;

Think not the strength of any common man
Is that they feel. They serve a charmed frame,
The which a power pervades, that ten times
trebles

The natural energy of each single nerve
To sweep you down as reeds.

APP. Obey my orders!

ICIL. Appius! before I quit the Forum, let me
Address a word to you.

APP. Be brief, then!

ICIL. I st not enough you have deprived us,
Appius,

Of the two strongest bulwarks to our liberties,
Our tribunes and our privilege of appeal
To the assembly of the people? Cannot
The honour of the Roman maids be safe?
Thou know'st this virgin is betroth'd to me,
Wife of my hope—Thou shalt not cross my hope
And I retain my life—attempt it not!—

I stand among my fellow-citizens—
His fellow-soldiers hem *VIRGINIUS* round;

Both men and gods are on our side; but grant
I stood alone, with nought but virtuous love
To hearten me—alone would I defeat
The execution of thy infamous

Decree! I'll quit the Forum now, but not
Alone—my love! my wife! my free-born maid—
The virgin standard of my pride and manhood
"Of peerless motto!—rich and fresh, and shin-

ing,
And of device most rare and glorious!"—

I'll bear off safe with me—unstrain'd—untouch'd!
(*Embracing her.*)

APP. Your duty, lictors—*CLAUDIUS*, look to
your right.

ICIL. True citizens!

TIT. Down with the traitor!

SER. Down with him—slay him!

(*The lictors and Claudius are driven
back—Claudius takes refuge at
Appius's feet, who has descended,
and throws up his arms as a signal
to both parties to desist—whereupon
the people retire a little.*)

APP. So, friends! we thank you that you don't
deprive us

Of everything; but leave your magistrates,
At least their persons, sacred—their decrees,
It seems, you value as you value straws,
And in like manner break them. Wherefore stop
When you have gone so far? You might, methinks,

As well have kill'd my client at my feet!

As threaten him with death before my face!

Rise, *CLAUDIUS*! I perceive *ICILIUS*' aim:

He labours to restore the tribuneship

By means of a sedition. We'll not give him

The least pretence of quarrel. (R. c.) We shall
wait

VIRGINIUS's arrival till to-morrow.

His friends take care to notice him—The camp's
But four hours' journey from the city. Till
To-morrow, then, let me prevail with you
To yield up something of your right, and let
The girl remain at liberty.

CLAUD. (R.) If they
Produce security for her appearance,
I am content.

TIT. I'll be your security.

SER. And I.

CITIZENS. We'll all be your security
(*They hold up their hands.*)

ICIL. My friends,
And fellow-citizens, I thank you; but
Reserve your kindness for to-morrow, friends,
If *CLAUDIUS* still persist—To-day, I hope,
He will remain content with my security,
And that of *NUMITORIUS*, for the maid's
Appearance.

APP. See she do appear!—and come
Prepar'd to pay the laws more reverence,
As I shall surely see that they receive it.
(*Exeunt Appius, Claudius, and lic-*
tors, M. D.)

ICIL. Look up! look up! my sweet *VIRGINIA*,
Look up! look up! you will see none but friends,
O that such eyes should e'er meet other pro-
spects!

VIRGINIA. *ICILIUS*! Uncle! lead me home!

ICILIUS.

You did not think to take a slave to wife?

ICIL. I thought, and think, to wed a free-born
maid;

And thou, and thou alone, art she, *VIRGINIA*!

VIRGINIA. I feel as I were so—I do not think
I am his slave! *VIRGINIUS* not my father!
VIRGINIUS, my dear father, not my father!
It cannot be; my life must come from him;
For, make him not my father, it will go
From me.—I could not live, an he were not
My father!

ICIL. Dear *VIRGINIA*, calm thy thoughts.

But who shall warn *VIRGINIUS*?

NUM. I've ta'en care

Of that; no sooner heard I of this claim,
Than I despatch'd thy brother *LUCIUS*,
Together with my son, to bring *VIRGINIUS*,
With all the speed they could; and caution'd
them

(As he is something over quick of temper,
And might snatch justice, rather than sue for it)
To evade communication of the cause,
And merely say his presence was required,
Till we should have him with us. Come, *VIRGINIA*;
Thy uncle's house shall guard thee, till thou
find'st

Within thy father's arms a citadel,
Whence *CLAUDIUS* cannot take thee.

ICIL. He shall take

A thousand lives first.

TIT. Ay, ten thousand lives.

ICIL. Hear you, *VIRGINIA*! Do you hear your
friends?

VIRGINIA. Let him take my life first: I am con-
tent

To be his slave then—if I am his slave.

ICIL. Thou art a free-born Roman maid, *VIR-*
GINIA,

All Rome doth know thee so, *VIRGINIA*—

All Rome will see thee so.

CITIZENS. We will! we will!

ICIL. You'll meet us here to-morrow?

Citizens. All! all!

Jeil. Cease not to clamour 'gainst this outrage.

Tell it

In every corner of the city; and
Let no man call himself a son of Rome,
Who stands aloof when tyranny assails
Her fairest daughter. Come, Virginia,
'Tis not a private, but a common wrong;
'Tis every father's, lover's, freeman's cause;
To-morrow! fellow citizens, to-morrow!
Citizens. To-morrow!

[*Exeunt shouting, L.*]

SCENE IV.—*The camp.*

Enter S. OPIIUS and Q. F. VIBULANUS.

Opp. (L.) Has he set out?

Vibul. He has, my Oppius,

And never to return! His guard's instructed
To take good care of him. There's not a man
But's ten times sold to us, and of our wishes
Fully possess'd. Dentatus will no more
Obstruct us in our plans. He did not like
The site of our encampment. He will find
At least the air of it was wholesome.

Opp. What

Report are they instructed to bring back?

Vibul. They fell into an ambush—He was slain.

Opp. But should the truth, by any means, come out?

Vibul. Imprison them, and secretly despatch them,

Or ope the dungeon doors, and let them 'scape.

Opp. I should prefer the latter method.

Vibul. Well,

That be our choice. But when it is determined
To spill blood otherwise than as it may
Be spill'd, to hesitate about some dross
Is weakness, may be fatal—Come, my friend,
Let us be seen about the camp, and ready,
With most admiring ear, to catch the tidings
Will be the wonder of all ears, but ours.
Here's one anticipates us!

Enter MARCUS, R.

Well, your news?

Marc. (R.) Dentatus is no more! but he has
dearly sold his life. The matter has been reported
as you direct'd. By few it is received with
credence—by many with doubt; while some bold
spirits stop not at muttering, but loudly speak
suspicion of foul play. A party that we met, a
mile beyond the lines, no sooner heard our story,
than they set on to bring the body to the camp.
Others have followed them. Fabius, we have your
gaze for safety.

Vibul. You have.—Come, let us show ourselves.—

Guilt hides,

And we must wear the port of innocence,

That more than half-way meets accusal.—Come.

[*Exeunt, R.*]

SCENE V.—*A mountainous pass.—The body of DENTATUS discovered on a bier, L. C.—Soldiers mourning over it.—Trumpets,*

Enter VIRGINIUS, R. V. E.

Vir. (C.) Where is Dentatus?—Where is the
gallant soldier?

Ah, comrade! comrade! warm! yet warm! So
lately

Gone, when I would have given the world, only
To say farewell to thee, or even get
A parting look! O gallant, gallant soldier,
The god of war might sure have spar'd a head
Grown gray in serving him! My brave old com-
rade!

The father of the field! Thy silver locks
Other anointing should receive, than what
Their master's blood could furnish!

1st Soldier. There has been treachery here.

Vir. What!

1st Soldier. The slain are all our own. None of
the bodies are stripp'd—These are all Romans.
There is not the slightest trace of an enemy's
retreat—And now I remember they made a sudden
halt, when we came in sight of them at the foot
of the mountain—Mark'd you not, too, with what
confused haste they told their story, directed us,
and hurried on to the camp?

Vir. Revenge! The Decemvirs! Ay, the De-
cemvirs!

For every drop of blood thou shalt have ten,
Dentatus!

Luc. (Without.) What ho! Virginius! Vir-
ginius!

Vir. Here! here!

Enter LUCIUS, R.

Luc. 'Tis well you're found, Virginius!

Vir. What makes you from the city? Look!

My Lucius what a sight you're come to witness.

My brave old comrade! Honest Siccus!

"Siccus Dentatus, that true son of Rome,
On whose white locks the mother look'd more
proudly

Than on the raven ones of her youngest and

Most hopeful sons, is nothing but this,

The sign and token of himself!" Look, com-
rades,

Here are the foes have slain him—Not a trace

Of any other—not a body stripp'd—

Our father has been murdered—We'll revenge
him

Like sons! Take up the body! Bear it to

The camp; and as you move your solemn march,

Be dumb—or, if you speak, be it but a word;

And be that word—Revenge!

(*The soldiers bear off the body, R.—
Virginius, following, is stopped by
Lucius.*)

Luc. (L. C.) Virginius!

Vir. I did not mind thee, Lucius!

Uncommon things make common things forgot.

Hast thou a message for me, Lucius? Well!

I'll stay and hear it—but be brief; my heart

Follows poor Dentatus.

Luc. (C.) You are wanted
In Rome.

Vir. On what account?

Luc. On your arrival

You'll learn.

Vir. How! is it something can't be told

At once? Speak out, boy! Ha! your looks are
loaded

With matter—Is't so heavy that your tongue

Cannot unburden them? Your brother left

The camp on duty yesterday—hath aught

Happen'd to him? Did he arrive in safety?

Is he safe? Is he well?

Luc. He is both safe and well.

Vir. What then? What then? Tell me the matter, Lucius.

Luc. I have said
It shall be told you.

Vir. Shall! I stay not for
That shall, unless it be so close at hand
It stop me not a moment.—'Tis too long
A coming. Fare you well, my Lucius.
(*Going, r.*)

Luc. (*c.*) Stay,
Virginius.—Hear me then with patience.

Vir. (*Returns.*) Well,
I am patient.

Luc. Your Virginia—
Vir. (*r. c.*) Stop, my Lucius!
I am cold in every member of my frame!
If 'tis prophetic, Lucius, of thy news,
(Give me such token as her tomb would, Lucius—
I'll bear it better.—Silence.

Luc. You are still—
Vir. I thank thee, Jupiter! I am still a father!
Luc. You are, Virginius, yet.
Vir. What, is she sick?
Luc. No.
Vir. Neither dead nor sick! All well! No
harm!

Nothing amiss! Each guarded quarter safe,
That fear may lay him down and sleep, and yet
This sounding the alarm! I swear thou tell'st
A story strangely.—Out with't! I have patience
For anything, since my Virginia lives,
And lives in health!

Luc. You are requir'd in Rome,

To answer a most novel suit.

Vir. Whose suit?

Luc. The suit of Claudius.

Vir. Claudius!

Luc. Him that's client
To Appius Claudius, the Decemvir.

Vir. What!

That pander! Ha! Virginia! you appear
To couple them. What makes my fair Virginia
In company with Claudius? Innocence
Beside lasciviousness! His suit! What suit?
Answer me quickly!—Quickly! lest suspense,
Beyond what patience can endure, coercing,
Drive reason from his seat!

Luc. He has claim'd Virginia.

Vir. Claim'd her! Claim'd her!

On what pretence?

Luc. He says she is the child
Of a slave of his, who sold her to thy wife.

Vir. Go on;—you see I'm calm.

Luc. He seized her in
The school, and dragg'd her to the Forum, where
Appius was giving judgment.

Vir. Dragg'd her to
The Forum! Well?—I told you, Lucius
I would be patient.

Luc. Numitorius there confronted him!

Vir. Did he not strike him dead?

True, true, I know it was in presence of
The Decemvir—O! had I confronted him!
Well! well! the issue—Well! (*L.*) o'erleap all
else,

And light upon the issue! Where is she?

Luc. (*r.*) I was despatch'd to fetch thee, ere I
could learn.

Vir. The claim of Claudius—Appius's client—
Ha!

I see the master-cloud (*c.*)—this ragged one,
That lowers before, moves only in subservience

To the ascendant of the other—Jove,
With its own mischief break it and disperse it,
And that be all the ruin! Patience! Prudence!
Nay, prudence, but no patience.—Come! a slave
Dragg'd through the streets in open day! my
child!

My daughter! my fair daughter, in the eyes
Of Rome! O! I'll be patient. Come! the essence
Of my best blood in the free common ear
Condemn'd as vile! O! I'll be patient. Come!
O they shall wonder.—I will be so patient.

[*Exeunt, r.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Numitorius's house.

VIRGINIA discovered, *c.*, supported by SERVIA.

Virginia. Is he not yet arrived? Will he not
come?

Servia. He surely will.

Virginia. He surely will! More surely
He had arrived already, had he known
How he is wanted—"They have miss'd him,
Servia!

Don't tell me, but I know they have, or surely
We had not now been looking for him." Where's
My uncle?

Servia. Finding you had fallen asleep
After such watching, he went forth to hear
If there were any tidings of Virginius.
He's here.

Enter NUMITORIUS, *r.*—VIRGINIA looks at him
inquisitively for some time.

Virginia. Not come! not come! I am sure of it!
He will not come. Do you not think he'll come?
Will not my father come? What think you,
uncle?

Speak to me, speak—O give me any words,
Rather than what looks natter.

Num. (*c.*) Be compos'd!

I hope he'll come!

Virginia. A little while ago

You were sure of it—from certainty to hope
Is a poor step: you hope he'll come—One hope
One little hope, to face a thousand fears!

"Do you not know he'll come? O, uncle, where-
fore

Do you not know he'll come? Had I been you,
I had made sure of it.

Num. All has been done

That could be done.

Virginia. Poor all, that do so little!

One would imagine little needs be done

To bring a father to the succour of

His child!" 'Tis near the time!

Num. It is, indeed!

Virginia. Must I go forth with you? Must I
again

Be dragg'd along by Claudius as his slave,

And none again to succour me?—Icilius!

Icilius! Does your true betrothed wife

Call on you, and you hear not? My Icilius!

Am I to be your wife or Claudius's slave?

Where—where are you, Icilius?

Enter ICILIUS, *r.*

Icil. My Virginia!

What's to be done, my friend? 'tis almost time.
(*To Numitorius.*)

Virginia, I hear what you are saying—it is time—

“O, who could have believed it, that Icilius should ever say ‘twas time to yield me to Another’s claim!”—And will you give me up? Can you devise no means to keep me from him? Could we not fly?

(*Icilius looks earnestly at Numitorius, who fixes his eyes steadfastly on the ground—Icilius droops his head.*)

I see!—Your pledge must be redeem’d, although it cost you your Virginia.

Vir. (*Without, R.*) Is she here?

Virginia, Ah!

Enter VIRGINIUS.

Vir. My child! my child!

(*Virginia rushes into her father’s arms.*)

Virginia, I am! I feel I am! I know I am! My father! my dear father! “I despair’d Of seeing you! You’re come! and come in time.

And, O! how much the more in time, when hope had given you up. O! welcome, welcome foot, Whose wished step is heard when least expected!”

Vir. (*c.*) Brother! Icilius! thank you! thank you.—All

Has been communicated to me. Ay! And would they take thee from me? Let them try it!

You’ve taken your measures well—I scarce could pass

Along, so was I check’d by loving hands Ready to serve me. Hands with hearts in them! So thou art Claudius’ slave? And if thou art, I’m surely not thy father! Blister’d villain! You have warn’d our neighbours, have you not, to attend

As witnesses? To be sure you have. A fool To ask the question. Dragg’d along the streets too!

’Twas very kind in him, to go himself And fetch thee—such an honour should not pass Without acknowledgment. I shall return it In full! in full!

Num. (*R. c.*) Pray you be prudent, brother.

Virginia. (*c.*) Dear father, be advis’d—Will you not, father?

Vir. I never saw you look so much like your mother in all my life!

Virginia. You’ll be advis’d, dear father?

Vir. It was her soul—her soul, that play’d just then

About the features of her child, and lit them Into the likeness of her own. When first She plac’d thee in my arms—I recollect it As a thing of yesterday!—she wish’d, she said, That it had been a man. I answer’d her, It was the mother of a race of men; And paid her for thee with a kiss. Her lips Are cold now—could they but be warm’d again, How they would clamour for thee!

Virginia. My dear father, You do not answer me! Will you not be advis’d?

Vir. I will not take him by the throat and strangle him!

But I could do it! I could do it! Fear not: I will not strike while any head I love Is in the way. It is not now a time

To tell thee—but, would’st thou believe it!—honest

Siccius Dentatus has been murder’d by them.

Icili. Murdered!

Num. Dentatus murder’d!

Virginia. O! how much

Have we to fear,

Vir. We have the less to fear.

I spread the news at every step—A fire Is kindled, that will blaze at but a breath Into the fiercest flame!

Num. ’Tis time Let’s haste

To the Forum.

(*Going, R.*)

Vir. Let the Forum wait for us!

Put on no show of fear when villany

Would wrestle with you! It can keep its feet

Only with cowards! I shall walk along

Slowly and calmly, with my daughter thus

In my hand: though with another kind of gripe

Than that which Claudius gave her. Well, I say,

I’ll walk along thus, in the eyes of Rome.

Go you before, and what appeal soe’er

You please, make you to rouse up friends. For me,

I shall be mute—my eloquence is here—

Her tears—her youth—her innocence—her beauty!

If orators like these can’t move the heart,

Tongues surely may be dumb.

Icili. (*L. c.*) A thousand hearts

Have spoke already in her cause!

Vir. Come on!

Fear not! it is your father’s grasp you feel.

O, he’ll be strong as never man was, that

Will take thee from it. Come, Virginia,

We trust our cause to Rome, and to the gods!

(*Virginia leads her off, R.; Icilius, &c., follow.*)

SCENE II.—The Forum.

Enter APPIUS and LICTORS, *R. U. R.*

App. See you keep back the people! Use your fasces!

With firmer hands, or hearts. Your hands are firm

Enough, would but your hearts perform their office,

“And leave your hands at liberty, not hang Upon them with unseemly fears and clamours!”

Look to it! “Time! hadst thou the theme that I have

For speed, thou would’st not move this cripple’s gait;

But there’s no urging thee, and thou wast ever

Dull fellow traveller to young Impatience,

Dragging him back upon the road he pants;

To run, but cannot find without thee.”

Enter MARCUS, *R.*

Well?

Marc. (*R.*) News has arriv’d, that speaks as if Dentatus

Was murder’d by the order of your colleagues!

There’s not a face I meet but lowers with it:

The streets are filled with thronging groups, that, as

You pass, grow silent, and look sullen round on you,

Then fall again to converse.

App. (*c.*) ’Tis ill-timed.

Marc. What say you, Appius?

App. Murder's ill-tim'd, I say,
Happen when 'twill; but now is most ill-tim'd,
When Rome is in a ferment, on account
Of Claudius, and this girl he calls his slave;
"For come when evil will, or how it will,
All's laid to our account!" Look out and see
If Claudius be approaching yet.

(*Marcus retires into background.*)

"My wish,
Like an officious friend, comes out of time
To tell me of success. I had rather far
I had miscarried—they run high enough;
They wanted not this squall on squall to raise
them
Above their present swell—the waves run high
Enough, through which we steer; but such a
haven,
If won, can never be too dearly won."

Marc. (*Advancing.*) Claudius is here!

Enter CLAUDIUS, L.

App. Well, Claudius, are the forces
At hand?

Claud. They are, and timely, too; the people
Are in unwonted ferment.

App. I have heard
Word has arriv'd of old Dentatus' death;
Which, as I hear, and wonder not to hear it,
The mutinous citizens lay to our account.

Claud. That's bad enough; yet—

App. Ha! what's worse?

Claud. 'Tis lost

At once to speak what you must learn at last,
Yet last of all would learn.

App. Virginii!

Claud. Yes!

He has arriv'd in Rome.

Marc. They are coming, Appius.

Claud. Fly, Marcus, hurry down the forces!

(*Exit Marcus.*)

Appius,
Be not o'erwhelm'd!

App. There's something awes me at
The thought of looking on her father.

Claud. Look

Upon her, my Appius! Fix your gaze upon
The treasures of her beauty, nor avert it
Till they are thine. Haste! Your tribunal!
Haste!

APPIUS ascends the Tribunal.—*Enter, L., NUMI-
TORIUS, LUCIUS, CITIZENS, VIRGINIUS*
leading his daughter, SERVIA, and CITIZENS.—
A dead silence prevails.—VIRGINIUS and daugh-
ter stand L.

Vir. Does no one speak? I am defendant here.
Is silence my opponent? Fit opponent
To plead a cause too foul for speech! What
brow

Shameless gives front to this most valiant cause,
That tries its prowess 'gainst the honour of
A girl, yet lacks the wit to know that they
Who cast off shame should likewise cast off
fear—

"And on the verge o' the combat wants the
nerve

To stammer forth the signal!"

App. You had better,
Virginii, wear another kind of carriage:
This is not the fashion that will serve you.

Vir. (*c.*) *Haring left Virginia, L., with Icilius.*
The fashion, Appius! Appius Claudius, tell me

The fashion it becomes a man to speak in,
Whose property in his own child—the offspring
Of his own body, near to him as is
His hand, his arm—yea, nearer—closer far,
Knit to his heart—I say, who has his property
In such a thing, the very self of himself,
Disputed—and I'll speak so, Appius Claudius;
I'll speak so—Pray you tutor me!

App. Stand forth,
Claudius! If you lay claim to any interest
In the question now before us, speak; if not,
Bring on some other cause.

Claud. (*r. c.*) Most noble Appius—

Vir. And are you the man
That claims my daughter for his slave?—Look at
me,

And I will give her to thee.

Claud. She is mine, then:

Do I not look at you?

Vir. Your eye does, truly,
But not your soul. I see it through your eye
Shifting and shrinking—turning every way
To shun me. "You surprise me, that your eye,
So long the bully of its master, knows not
To put a proper face upon a lie,
But gives the port of impudence to falsehood,
When it would pass it off for truth." Your soul
Dares as soon show its face to me.—Go on,
I had forgot; the fashion of my speech
May not please Appius Claudius.

Claud. I demand

Protection of the Decemvir!

App. You shall have it.

Vir. Doubtless!

App. Keep back the people, victors! What's
Your plea? You say the girl's your slave—Pro-
duce

Your proofs.

Claud. My proof is here, which, if they can,
Let them confront. The mother of the girl—

(*Virginii, about to speak, is with-
held by Numitorius.*)

Num. (*r. c.*) Hold, brother! Hear them out,
or suffer me

To speak.

Vir. (*L. c.*) Man, I must speak, or go mad!
And if I do go mad, what then will hold me
From speaking? "Were't not better, brother,
think you,

To speak and not go mad, than to go mad
And then to speak?" She was thy sister, too!

Well, well, speak thou. I'll try, and if I can
Be silent. (*Retires.*)

Num. Will she swear she is her child?

Vir. (*Starting forward.*) To be sure she will—a
most wise question that!

Is she not his slave? Will his tongue lie for
him—

Or his hand steal—or the finger of his hand
Beckon, or point, or shut, or open for him?
To ask him if she'll swear!—Will she walk or run,
Sing, dance, or wag her head; do anything
That is most easy done! She'll as soon swear!
What mockery it is to have one's life
In jeopardy by such a bare-fac'd trick!
Is it to be endur'd? I do protest
Against her oath!

App. No law in Rome, Virginii,
Seconds you. If she swear the girl's her child,
The evidence is good, unless confronted
By better evidence. Look you to that,
Virginii. I shall take the woman's oath.

Virginia. Icilius!

Icilius. Fear not, love; a thousand oaths will answer her.

App. (To the Slaves, L.) You swear the girl's your child,

And that you sold her to Virginius' wife, Who pass'd her for her own. Is that your oath?

Slave. (Coming round to the front of the Tribunal.) It is my oath.

App. Your answer now, Virginius?

Vir. Here it is! (Brings Virginia forward to C.) Is this the daughter of a slave? I know 'Tis not with men, as shrubs and trees, that by The shoot you know the rank and order of The stem. Yet who from such a stem would look

For such a shoot? My witnesses are these—The relatives and friends of Numitoria, Who saw her, ere Virginia's birth, sustain The burden which a mother bears, nor feels The weight, with longing for the sight of it. Here are the ears that listened to her sighs In nature's hour of labour, which subside In the embrace of joy—the hands, that when The day first look'd upon the infant's face, And never look'd so pleas'd, help'd them up to it, And bless'd her for a blessing—Here, the eyes That saw her lying at the generous And sympathetic fount, that at her cry Sent forth a stream of liquid living pearl To cherish her enamell'd veins. The lie Is most unfruitful then, that takes the flower—The very flower our bed connubial grew—To prove its barrenness! Speak for me, friends, Have I not spoke the truth?

Women and Citizens. You have, Virginius.

App. Silence, keep silence there, No more of that!

You're very ready for a tumult, citizens.

(Troops appear behind.)

Lictors, make way to let these troops advance! We have had a taste of your forbearance, masters, And wish not for another.

Vir. Troops in the Forum!

App. Virginius, have you spoken?

Vir. If you have heard me, I have: if not, I'll speak again.

App. You need not,

Virginius; I have evidence to give, Which, should you speak a hundred times again, Would make your pleading vain.

Vir. Your hand, Virginia!

Stand close to me. (Aside.)

App. My conscience will not let me Be silent. 'Tis notorious to all, That Claudius' father, at his death, declar'd me The guardian of his son—This cheat has long Been known to me. I know the girl is not Virginius' daughter.

Vir. Join your friends, Icilius, And leave Virginia to my care. (Aside, L. C.)

App. "The justice

I should have done my client, unrequir'd, Now cited by him, how shall I refuse?"

Vir. Don't tremble, girl! don't tremble.

(Aside.)

App. Virginius, I feel for you; but, though you were my father, The majesty of justice should be sacred—Claudius must take Virginia home with him!

Vir. And if he must, I should advise him, Appius,

To take her home in time, before his guardian Complete the violation, which his eyes Already have begun. (Turning to the Citizens.) Friends! fellow-citizens!

Look not on Claudius—Look on your Decemvir!

He is the master claims Virginia! The tongues that told him she was not my child Are these—the costly charms he cannot purchase, Except by making her the slave of Claudius, His client, his purveyor, that caters for His pleasures—markets for him—picks, and scents,

And tastes, that he may banquet—serves him up His sensual feast, and is not now a-ham'd, In the open, common street, before your eyes—Frightening your daughters and your matrons' cheeks

With blushes they ne'er thought to meet—to help him

To the honour of a Roman maid! my child!

Who now clings to me, as you see, as if This second Tarquin had already coil'd His arms around her. Look upon her, Romans! Befriend her! succour her! see her not polluted Before her father's eyes!—He is but one. Tear her from Appius and his lictors, while She is unstain'd—Your hands! your hands! your hands!

Citizens. They are yours, Virginius!

App. Keep the people back—

Support my lictors, soldiers! Seize the girl, And drive the people back.

Icilius. (L.) Down with the slaves!

(The people make a show of resistance, but, upon the advancing of the Soldiers, retreat, and leave Icilius, Virginius, and his daughter, &c., in the hands of Appius and his party.)

Deserted!—Cowards! Traitors! "Let me free But for a moment! I relied on you; Had I relied upon myself alone I had kept them still at bay! I knelt to you—Let me but loose a moment, if 'tis only To rush upon your swords!"

Vir. Icilius, peace!

You see how 'tis; we are deserted, left Alone by our friends, surrounded by our enemies, Nerveless and helpless

App. Away with him!

Icilius. Virginia! Tyrant! My Virginia!

App. Away with him! (Icilius is taken aside.) Separate them, lictors!

Vir. Let them forbear awhile, I pray you, Appius:

It is not very easy. Though her arms Are tender, yet the hold is strong, by which She grasps me, Appius—Forecing them will hurt them;

They'll soon unclasp themselves. Wait but a little—

You know you're sure of her!

App. I have not time

To idle with thee; give her to my lictors.

Vir. Appius, I pray you wait! If she is not My child, she hath been like a child to me For fifteen years. If I am not her father, I have been like a father to her, Appius, For even such a time. "They that have liv'd So long a time together, in so near And dear society, may be allow'd A little time for parting." Let me take The maid aside, I pray you, and confer

A moment with her nurse; perhaps she'll give me
Some token, will unloose a tie, & twin'd
And knotted round my heart, that if you break it
My heart breaks with it.

App. Have your wish. Be brief!
Lictors, look to them.

Virginia. Do you go from me?
Do you leave me? Father! father!

Vir. No, my child;

No, my Virginia—come along with me.

Virginia. Will you not leave me? Will you take
me with you?

Will you take me home again? Oh, bless you,
bless you!

My father! my dear father! Art thou not?

My father?

(*Virginus, perfectly at a loss what to do, looks anxiously around the Forum; at length his eye falls on a butcher's stall, L., with a knife upon it.*)

Vir. This way, my child—No, no; I am not
going

To leave thee, my Virginia! I'll not leave thee.

App. Keep back the people, soldiers! Let them
not

Approach Virginus! Keep the people back!

(*Virginus seizes the knife in the folds of his toga.*)

Well, have you done?

Vir. Short time for converse, Appius;

But I have

App. I hope you are satisfied.

Vir. I am—

I am—that she is my daughter!

App. Take her, lictors!

(*Virginus shrieks, and falls half dead upon her father's shoulder.*)

Vir. Another moment, pray you. Bear with me
A little—'Tis my last embrace. 'Twon't try
Your patience beyond bearing, if you're a man!
Lengthen it as I may. I cannot make it
Long! My dear child! My dear Virginia!

(*Kissing her.*)
There is only one way to save thine honour—
Tis this—

(*Stabs her, and draws out the knife.—She falls and dies, L.*)

Lo! Appius! with this innocent blood,
I do devote thee to the infernal gods!

Make way there!

App. Stop him! Seize him!

Vir. If they dare

To tempt the desperate weapon that is madden'd
With drinking my daughter's blood, why let
them; Thus

It rushes in amongst them. Way there! Way!
(*Exit through the soldiers.*)

Enter HONORIUS and VALERIUS.

Hon. What tumult's this?—

The fair Virginia

Kill'd by her father's hand, to save her from
The lust of Appius Claudius! Most foul cause
That makes so dark a deed look fair?

App. Remove

The body, lictors.

Scil. At the peril of

Their lives! Death is abroad, at work, and most
In earnest when with such a feat as this
He opens his exploits!

App. Obey me, slaves!

Hon. Defend the body, freemen. There's a
spark
Remaining still, which, though not strong
enough

To light it up with its own beauteous life,
May yet rekindle liberty, and save
Expiring Rome!

Patrons. It shall not be removed!

App. Seize it, I say!

Val. Back, slaves! Give place to freemen!

(*A tumult ensues; the people deprive the lictors of their fasces, and drive them, with the soldiers, with Appius Claudius, &c., off the stage, then return shouting.*)

Scil. Ay, shout and shout: a far more glorious
cause.

Call'd for your voices, and you had not then

The breath to whisper. How that ear had
thank'd you,

Had you as tender been of the jewel of
Its precious sense as of the empty casket!

Hon. A litter, citizens, to lift the body,
And bear it through the streets; the spectacle
Will fill all eyes with tears, all hearts with fire!

Scil. No hand but mine shall touch it: I will
be

Its living bier.

Hon. Scellius, listen to me!

Thou art not thyself, and knowest not

There is a sweeter strain than that of grief—
Revenge, that drowns it. Suffer us to bear
Thy bride along the streets; a second, but
Unstained Lucretia, buying with her blood
The life of Rome and freedom!

Scil. Rome and freedom!

There is your ransom! such a costly one—

O, you are dear, to be so dearly won!

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A street.

Enter APPIUS, L.

App. I do abjure all further league with them;
They have most basely yielded up their pow'r,
"And compromis'd their glory. Had they died
In their high seats, they had liv'd demi-gods;
But now they live to die like basest men!"
Power gone, life follows! (c.) Well! 'tis well we
know

The worst! (r.) The worst?—The worst is yet to
come,

And, if I err not, hither speeds a messenger
Whose heel it treads upon.

Enter VIBULANUS, hastily, and other Decemvirs,
with MARCUS, L.

Vibul. Honorius and Valerius are elected
To the consulate.—Virginus is made Tribune.

App. No doubt they'd fill their offices, when
ours
Were laid so poorly down.—You have acted
wisely!

Vibul. Who could resist Virginus, raving at
The head of the revolted troops, with all
The commons up in arms? Waste not dear
time!

Look to your safety, Appius. 'Tis resolved
To cite you instantly before the Consuls.

App. Look to my safety, say you? You would
bid

A man, that's tumbling from a precipice
A hundred fathoms high, and midway down,
Look to his safety! What has he to snatch at?
Air!—E'en so much have I.

Vibul. Withdraw awhile
From Rome. We shall recall you with applause
And honours.

App. Yes! you saw me on the brink—
Beheld it giving way beneath my feet—
And saw me tottering o'er the hideous leap,
Whose sight seat round the brain with madd'ning
whirl.

With but a twiz to stay me, which you cut,
Because it w's your friend that hung by it—
Most kindly.

Vibul. Nay, employ the present time
In looking to your safety—"that secured,
Reproach us as you will."

App. I am in your hands,
Lead me which way you please.

ICILIUS, (Without.) Hold! Stand!

Enter ICILIUS, with HONORIUS and VALE-
RIUS as Consuls, NUMITORIUS and lictors, L.

ICIL. Did I not tell you 'twas the tyrant?

Look,
Was I not right? I felt that he was present
Ere mine eye told it me.—You are our prisoner.

App. On what pretence, Icilius?

ICIL. Ask of poor
Virginus, tottering between despair
And madness, as he seeks the home, where once
He found a daughter!

App. I demand due time
To make up my defence.

ICIL. Demand due time!

Appius!—Assign the cause why you denied
A Roman maid, of free condition,
Her liberty provisionally, while
Her plea remain'd unjudg'd. No answer, Appius!
Lictors, lay hold upon him—to prison with him!
Look to him well. To prison with the tyrant!

[*Exeunt Appius and lictors, R.
Icilius and Numitorius, L.*]

Vibul. Let all his friends, that their own safety
prize,

Solicit straight for his enlargement: doff
Their marks of station, and to the vulgar eye
Disguise it with the garb of mourning; 'twill
Conciliate the crowd!—We know them well!
But humour them, they are water soon as fire.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—*Virginus's House.*

Enter LUCIUS and SERVIA, L.

Luc. (c.) Is he not yet come home?

Servia. (c.) Not since her death.

I dread his coming home, good Lucius.

Luc. (L.) A step! 'Tis Numitorius and Vir-
ginus.

Servia. Gods! how he looks!—See, Lucius, how
he looks!

Enter VIRGINIUS, attended by NUMITORIUS
and others, L.

Vir. (c.) 'Tis ease! 'Tis ease! I am content!

'Tis peace,
'Tis any'ing that is most soft and quiet.
And after such a dream!—I want my daughter;
Send me my daughter!

Num. Yes, his reason's gone.
Scarcely had he come in sight of his once sweet
And happy home, ere with a cry he fell
As one struck dead.—When to himself he came,
We found him as you see. How is it, brother?
Vir. How should it be but well? Our cause is
good.

Think you Rome will stand by, and see a man
Robb'd of his child? We are bad enough, but
yet

They should not so mistake us. "We are slaves,
But not yet monsters."—Call my daughter to me.
What keeps her thus? I never slept within
The threshold yet, without her meeting me
With a kiss. She's very long coming. Call her.

Num. Icilius comes! See, my Icilius, see!

Enter ICILIUS, L.

Vir. Come, come, make ready. Brother, you
and he

Go on before; I'll bring her after you.

ICIL. Ha!

Num. My Icilius, what a sight is there!
Virginus' reason is a wreck, so stripp'd
And broken by wave and wind, you scarce
Would know it was the gallant bark you saw
Riding so late in safety!

ICIL. (Taking Virginus's hand.) Father! fa-
ther!

That art no more a father!

Vir. Ha! what wet
Is this upon my hand? a tear, boy! Fie,
For shame! Is that the weapon you would
guard

Your bride with? First assay what steel can do?

Num. Not a tear has bless'd his eye since her
death! No wonder.

The fever of his brain, that now burns out,
Has drunk the source of sorrow's torrents dry.

ICIL. You would not have it otherwise? 'Twas
fit

The bolt, that struck the sole remaining branch,
And blasted it, should set the trunk on fire!

Num. If we could make him weep—

ICIL. (L.) I have that will make him,
If ought will do it. 'Tis her urn. 'Twas that
Which first drew tears from me. I'll fetch it.

But
I cannot think you wise, to wake a man
Who's at the mercy of the tempest. Better
You suffer him to sleep it through.

[*Exit Icilius, L.*]

Vir. Gather your friends together: tell them
of

Dentatus' murder. Screw the chord of rage
To the topmost pitch. Mine own is not mine own.
(Laughs.)

That's strange enough. Why does he not dispute
My right to my own flesh, and tell my heart
Its blood is not its own? He might as well.

(Laughs.)

But I want my child.

Enter LUCIUS, L.

Luc. Justice will be defeated!

Vir. (c.) Who says that?

He lies in the face of the gods! She is immaculate,

Immaculate, and immortal! And though all The guilty globe should blaze, she will spring up Through the fire, and soar above the crackling pile,

With not a downy feather ruffled by Its fierceness!

Nun. (L. c.) He is not himself! What new Oppression comes to tell us to our teeth, We only mock'd ourselves to think the days Of thralldom past?

Luc. The friends of Appius Beset the people with solicitations. The fickle crowd, that change with every change, Begin to doubt and soften. Every moment That's lost, a friend is lost. Appear among Your friends, or lose them!

Nun. Lucius, you Remain and watch Virginius.

[Exit, followed by all but Lucius and Servia.]

Vir. You remember, Don't you, nurse?

Servia. What, Virginius?

Vir. That she nurs'd

The child herself. "Inquire among your gossips, Which of them saw it; and, with such of them As can avouch the fact, without delay Repair to the Forum." Will she come or not? I'll call myself—She will not dare!—O when Did my Virginita dare—Virginita!

Is it a voice, or nothing answers me? I hear a sound so fine—there's nothing lives 'Twixt it and silence. "Such a slender one I've heard when I have talk'd with her in fancy! A phantom sound!" Ah! She is not here! They told me she was here: they have deceiv'd me;

And Appius was not made to give her up, But keeps her, and effects his wicked purpose While I stand talking here, and ask you if My daughter is my daughter! Though a legion Sentries that brothel, which he calls his palace, I'd tear her from him!

Luc. Hold, Virginius! Stay:

Appius is now in prison.

Vir. With my daughter!

He has secur'd her there! Ha! has he so? Gay offices for a dungeon! Hold me not, Or I will dash you down, and spoil you for My keeper. My Virginita, struggle with him! Appal him with thy shrieks; ne'er faint, ne'er faint!

I am coming to thee! I am coming to thee!

(Virginius rushes out, followed by Lucius, Servia, and others.)

SCENE III.—A dungeon.

APPIUS discovered.

App. From the palace to the dungeon is a road Trod oft, not oft retrud. What hope have I To pace it back again? I know of none! I am as one that's dead! "The dungeon, that

Encloses fallen greatness, may as well Be called its tomb." I am as much the carcase Of myself, as if the string were taken from My neck. Their hands long for the office. O, 'Tis worth the half of a plebeian's life, To get his greasy fingers on the throat Of a patrician! But I'll baulk them. Come! Appius shall have an executioner No less illustrious than himself.

(He is on the point of swallowing poison, when Vibulanius enters, R.)

Who's there?

Vibul. Your friend!

App. My Vibulanius!

Vibul. Appius, what

Was that you hid in such confusion, as I enter'd?

App. 'Tis a draught for life, which, swallow'd, She relishes so richly, that she cares not If she ne'er drink again! Here's health to you!

Vibul. Not out of such a cup as that, my Appius.

"Despair, that bids you drink it, as the cure Of canker'd life, but lies to you, and turns Your eyes from hope, that even now stands ready With outstretch'd arms to rush to your embrace." Your friends are busy for you with your foes—Your foes become your friends. Where'er a frown Appears against you, nothing's spar'd to make The wearer doff it, and put up a smile In its stead. "Your colleague Oppius is in prison.

Your client too. Their harm's your safety: it Distracts the appetite o' the dogs. They drop The morsel they took up before, as soon As a new one's thrown to them."

App. Thou giv'st me life Indeed!

Vibul. That I may give thee life indeed, I'll waste no longer time with thee; "for that Already taken to assure thee of Thy fast reviving fortunes, cheats them of The aid should help to re-establish them." Farewell, my Appius! If my absence takes A friend from thee, it leaves one with thee—Hope!

[Exit, R.]

App. And I will clasp it to me! Never friend Made sweeter promises. But snatches me from Beneath the feet of the vile herd, that's now Broke loose and roams at large, I'll show them who They'd trample on. "Hope! Hope! They say of thee,

Thou art a friend that promises, but cares not To keep his word. This once keep thine with Appius,

And he will give thee out so true a tongue, Thy word is bond enough!"—At liberty! Again at liberty! O give me power As well, for every minute of my thralldom I'll pick a victim from the common herd Shall groan his life in bondage. "Liberty! 'Tis triumph, power, dominion, everything!" Are ye not open yet, ye servile gates?

Let fall your chains, and push your bolts aside! It is your past and future lord commands you!

Vir. (Rushing in, R.) Give me my daughter!

App. Ha!

Vir. My child! my daughter!
My daughter! my Virginia! Give her me!

App. Thy daughter!

Vir. Ay! Deny that she is mine
And I will strangle thee, unless the lie
Should choke thee first.

App. Thy daughter!

Vir. Play not with me!

Provoke me not! Equivocate, and lo!
Thou sport'st with fire. I am wild, distracted,
mad!

I am all aflame—aflame! I tell thee, once
For all, I want my child, and I will have her;
So give her to me.

App. Cag'd with a madman! Ho!
Without there!

Vir. Not a step thou stirr'st from hence,
Till I have found my child. "Attempt that
noise

Again, and I will stop the vent, that not
A squeak shall pass it. There are plums for you
Will keep it a-r-t-g'h'. (Showing his fingers.) Please
you give me back

My daughter.

App. In truth she is not here, Virginins;
Or I would g've her to thee.

Vir. Would? Ay, should!

Tho' would were would not. Do you say, indeed,
She is not here? You nothing know of her.

App. Nothing, Virginins! good Virginins,
nothing.

Vir. How it I thrust my hand into your breast,
And tore your heart out, and confronted it
With your tongue? I'd like it. Shall we try it?
Fool!

Are not the ruffians leagued? The one would
swear

To the tale o' the other.

App. By the gods, Virginins,
Your daughter is not in my keeping.

Vir. Well,

Then I must seek her elsewhere. I did dream
That I had murder'd her—'Tis false! 'twas but
A dream—She isn't here, you say—Well! well!
Then I must go and seek her elsewhere—Yet
She's not at home—and where else should I seek
her

But there or here? Here! here! here! Yes, I
say,

But there or here—I tell you I must find her—
She must be here, or what do you here? What

But such a wonder of rich beauty could
Deck out a dungeon so as to despoil
A palace of its tenant? Art thou not
The tyrant Appius? Did'st thou not decree
My daughter to be Claudius' slave, who gave her
To his master? Have you not secur'd her here
To compass her dishonour, ere her father
Arrives to claim her?

App. No.

Vir. Do you tell me so?

Vile tyrant! Think you, shall I not believe
My own eyes before your tongue? Why, there
she is!

There at your back—her locks dishevell'd and
Her vestment torn! Her cheeks all faded with
Her pouring tears, "as flowers with too much
rain!"

Her form no longer kept and treasur'd up
"By her maiden-pride, like a rich casket, cast
Aside, neglected and forgot, because
The richer gem was shrin'd in it is lost!"

Villain! is this a sight to show a father?
And have I not a weapon to requite thee?

(Searches about his clothes.)

Ha! here are ten!

App. Keep down your hands? Help! help!

Vir. No other look but that! Look on! look
on!

It turns my very flesh to steel—Brave girl!

Keep thine eye fix'd—let it not wink—Look on!
[Exeunt, struggling, L.

Enter (R.) NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS,
Guard, and Soldier.

Num. Not here!

Luc. Is this the dungeon? Appius is not here,
Nor yet Virginins. You have sure mistaken.

Guard. This is the dungeon—Here Virginins
entered.

Num. Yet is not here! Hush! The abode of
death

Is just as silent. Gods! should the tyrant take
The father's life, in satisfaction for
The deed that robb'd him of the daughter's
charms—

Hush! hark! A groan! There's something stirs

Luc. 'Tis this way!

Num. Come on! Protect him, gods, or pardon
me

If with my own hand I revenge his death.

[Exeunt

SCENE IV.—Another dungeon. Virginins discovers
on one knee, with Appius lying dead before him.

Enter NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, with the Urn
VIRGINIA, and LUCIUS.

Num. What's here? Virginins! with the tyrant
prostrate and dead!

Luc. His senses are benumb'd; there is no and
to his mind, by which our words can reach
Help to raise him: the motion may recall per-
ce-
tion.

Num. His eye is not so deathlike fix'd: it mov-
a little.

Luc. Speak to him, Numitorius: he knows your
voice the best.

Num. Virginins!

Luc. I think he hears you; speak again.

Num. Virginins!

Vir. Ah!

(Virginins rises and comes forward
supported by Numitorius &
Lucius.)

Luc. That sigh has burst the spell which h-
him.

Num. Virginins! my dear brother!

Vir. Lighter! lighter! My heart is ten tin
lighter! What a load it has heav'd off! Where
he? I thought I had done it.

Num. Virginins!

Vir. Well, who are you? What do you wa-
I'll answer what I've done.

Num. Do you know me, brother? Speak
Icilius; try if he knows you.

Icil. (R.) Virginins!

Num. Try again.

Icil. Virginins!

r. (Sinking.) That voice—that voice—I know
that voice!
finds me of a voice was coupled with it,
made such music, once to hear it was
ough to make it ever after be
ember'd! (Icilius places the urn in his right
hand.)
t's this?
O. Virginia!

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT
THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

*Virginus looks alternately at Icilius and the urn—
looks at Numitorius and Lucius—seems particularly
struck by his mourning—looks at the urn again—
bursts into a passion of tears, and exclaims, "Vir-
ginia!"—Falls on Icilius's neck. Curtain drops.*

R.

L.

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OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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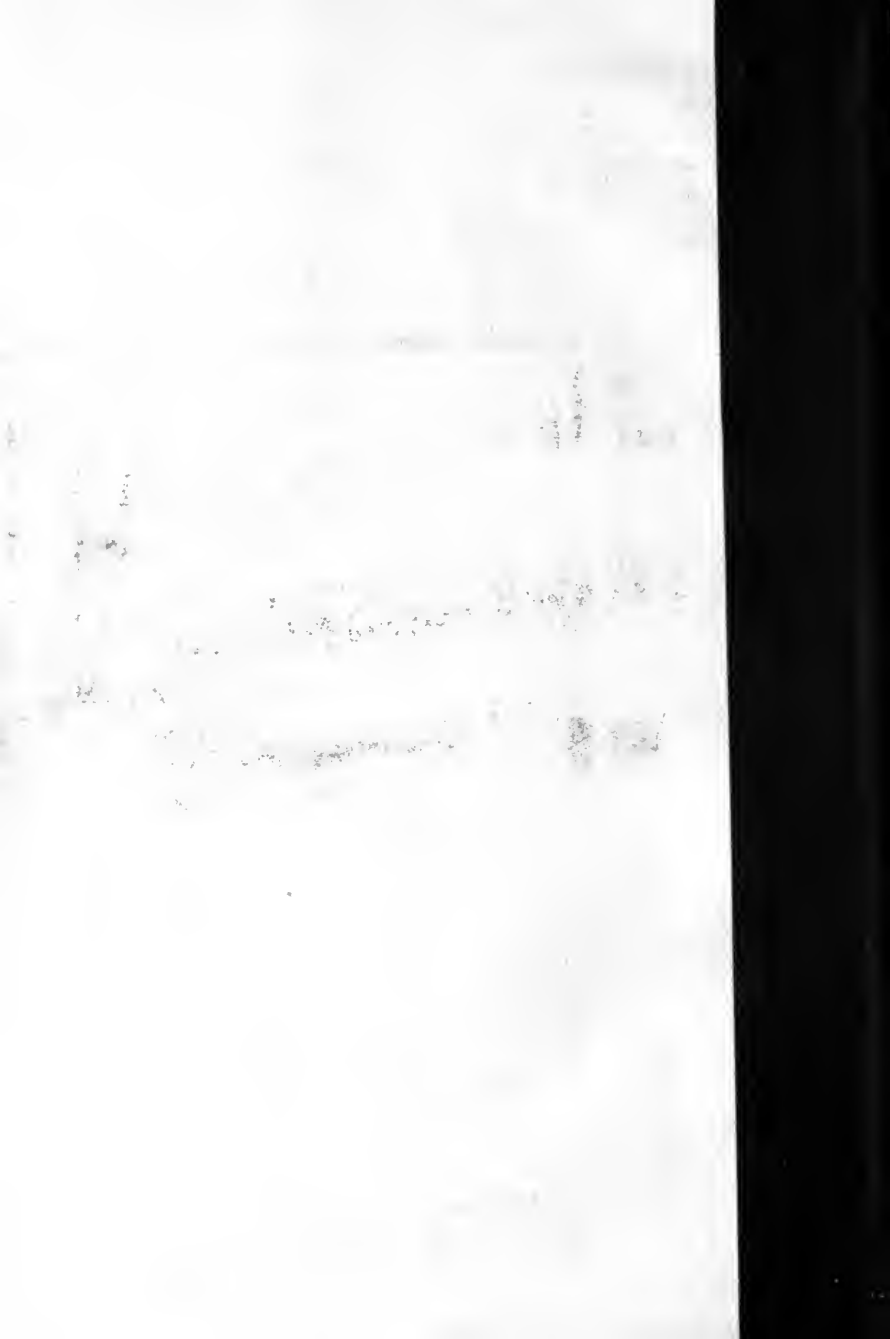
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